DOCUMENT RESUME

ED 207 293 CS 006 126

AUTHOR	Biggs, Shirley A., Ed.; And Others
TITLE	Thumbprints and Thoughtprints: Every Learner Unique. Proceedings of the Annual Pittsburgh Conference on Reading and Writing (32nd, Pittsburgh, Pennsylvania, 1981).
INSTITUTION	Pittsburgh Univ., Pa. Div. of Teacher Development.
PUB DATE	81
NOTE	197p.: Small print may not reproduce clearly.
AVAILABLE FROM	Faculty in Language Communications, 4H01 Forbes Quadrangle, University of Pittsburgh, Pittsburgh, PA 15260 ($6.00).
EDRS PRICE	MF01/PC08 Plus Postage.
DESCRIPTORS	Academically Gifted; Child Development; Elementary Secondary Education; English (Second Language); Grouping (Instructional Purposes); Higher Education; *Individualized Instruction; Literature Appreciation; Mainstreaming; Parent Participation; Reading Diagnosis; Reading Difficulties; *Reading Instruction; Refugees; *Writing Instruction

ABSTRACT

The 13 articles in this book are designed to help teachers develop the reading and writing potential of students through individualized instruction. Topics discussed in the articles are (1) child development problems faced by both parents and teachers, (2) reading difficulties that exist at all grade levels, (3) strategy-based reading instruction, (4) multiflex grouping to maximize learning in reading, (5) diagnosing the unique learner with reading difficulties in high school and college, (6) the implications of English language research for personalized instruction, (7) writing instruction for reluctant writers, (8) challenging every student through literature, (9) teaching English reading and writing to Vietnamese children, (10) mainstreaming, (11) the gifted child and the composing process, (12) the parent's role in meeting the special needs of children, and (13) activities for teaching reading at home. (FL)

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THUMBPRINTS AND THOUGHTPRINTS

EVERY LEARNER UNIQUE

Proceedings of the 32nd Annual
Pittsburgh Conference on Reading and Writing

Edited by

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Published By The
Faculty in Language Communications,
Division of Teacher Development
School of Education
University of Pittsburgh

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Acknowledgments

The editors acknowledge the invaluable support of James Kelly, Jr, Dean of the School of Education and Horton Southworth, Chairperson of the Division of Teacher Development. From the planning stages of the conference through the completion of this volume, they have actively encouraged our work. In addition, the editors thank Kathleen Kelley for permission to include her paper. Though "Teaching English Reading and Writing to Vietnamese Children" was not presented at the conference, the paper appears in this volume to complement our efforts to address the concerns of yet another unique learner.

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Part I

FOCUSING ON THE INDIVIDUAL

Educators recognize that students respond positively and productively to individual attention in the classroom. Yet, time, energy and material constraints often limit the degree to which even the most conscientious teacher can focus on developing the potential of each individual. Part I of this volume addresses both individual and "special" needs and offers suggestions for management, instruction and assessment of those needs.

Preschool children move through a series of predictable stages. Yet, parents and experienced teachers have come to realize that as predictable as the sequence of the developmental stages are, each child's pace and rate of development is unique. Moreover, special children--those with physical, emotional or psychological problems--require guidance from parents and instruction from teachers that reflects an understanding of the problems derived from the combination of the basic developmental sequence, the language learning environment and the health of the individual child.

Further, educators also recognize the importance of addressing reading and writing instruction throughout the grades and beyond. They know that language skills are required at all school levels and that students may experience difficulty at any or all of those levels. Guidelines are offered to help the teacher anticipate problems and prepare a variety of instructional solutions that assure maximum student achievement.

The acceptance and use of the expierences each child brings to school as the basis for stimulating reading and writing growth is frequently suggested in textbooks. Often the Language Experience Approach is offered as one means of capitalizing on the child's experiential background. Here, both Language Experience and Strategy-based instruction are presented as options for utilizing student uniqueness as the basis for learning. Strategy-based instruction encourages the reader to select and practice reading behaviors found to be productive in increasing reading comprehension. The strategies are identified by examining carefully the student's own reading behavior.

Finally, conscientious, knowledgeable professionals recognize that while carefully devised instruction is important for improving reading and writing, instruction has little chance for success if it is not accompanied by effective diagnostic procedures and a carefully developed management system. A step-by-step process is described for assessing reading competence and Multiflex Grouping is presented as a viable option for managing classroom instruction. Thus, assessment and grouping concerns complete Part I and its focus on the individual.

STUDENT UNIQUENESS: CHILD DEVELOPMENT PROBLEMS FACED BY PARENTS AND TEACHERS

Nancy E. Curry
University of Pittsburgh

The purpose of this conference is to address issues involved in stimulating individual growth in reading and writing. This paper will provide a discussion of child development problems faced by parents and teacher. Therefore, I propose to look closely at how individual children grow and learn, how physical and emotional problems may affect the child's capacity for growth and development and what we who work with children can do to remediate some of these problems in order to facilitate development. Because the general conference focus is on reading and writing, both of which involve the ability to symbolize, mine will be a "back to basics" approach. In a sense I will be playing a semantic game, but I feel it is a serious one that we should all be involved with if we want to assure our children of the kind of education we want for them. We want all children to learn to read and to write, that is, to acquire the symbol system basic for membership in a highly symbolic society. My suggestion is that we look at the real basics - - those developmental foundations necessary for dealing with symbols in ever-increasing sophisticated ways.

We know that there are developmental milestones which most children achieve at approximately the same time period. Further, we know that there are highly individualistic ways by which children acheive these landmarks. As a simple example -- in motor development most children crawl before they walk, walk before they run, run before they skip and skip before they learn to ride a bicycle. However, within such a simplistic descriptive sequence, each of these acts requires synthesis and integration of earlier motoric accomplishments. Each child approaches these accomplishments in a unique fashion depending on constitutional endowment, environmental circumstances including interaction with both the physical and interpersonal environments, and a personal style that marks his individuality. For example, we are all familiar with the child whose style is to reach out eagerly for every environmental encounter. This child plunges into motoric acts seemingly oblivious to bumps and falls. However, through intense practice with many concommitant, inevitable failures such a child masters crawling, walking, running, skipping and bike riding with a sense of exhuberance that characterizes his approach to other developmental tasks such as talking (lots of babbling, expressive jargon prior to meaningful word usage). Contrast such a child with one whose parents describe him as cautious. Parents are likely to report that, "once he finally started to walk, he did it well. That is the way he learned to talk, too. He didn't say much but when he started we could understand most everything he said".

I use these two extreme examples to point out how individual differences will be reflected and will persist in individual learning styles when such children become involved in the ever increasingly sophisticated symbolic processes required for success in school.

Yet what of children who are disabled, either through physical or environmental circumstances? If we agree that all children are unique, we must further recognize that while all children have the innate urge and imperative need to explore, to interact with and master their environment, disabled children have a further attribute in common and that is that this ability to explore, interact with and master the environment is impaired with consequent distortions or deprivations of the normal child's experiences. Kay Mogford (1977) points out "Whilst the normal child's opportunities to explore and many experiences multiply as new capacities and abilities unfold, the handicapped child's slower development means that the effects of the handicap can be cumulative" (p. 171).

I have been asked to consider with you a variety of developmental problems such as those described by Reynolds & Birch (1977):

1. Vision Impairment
2. Hearing Impairments
3. Learning Diabilities and Behavior Disorders
4. Mental Retardation
5. Giftedness and Talent
6. Speech Difficulties

As Reynolds & Birch (1977) have indicated, developmental problems cover a wide range of the population and present behavioral manifestations which are highly variable both within and between classifications. Rather than deal with specific children within these specific categories, my focus will be on the normal developmental milestones children in general must encounter and the problems that arise when children because of their special needs are unable to negotiate these milestones or negotiate them on a different timetable.

Further, I raise the following questions: 1) What can we as parents and other workers do with such children as we struggle to understand how we can best stimulate individual growth in two sophisticated symbol systems, reading and writing? 2) How can we incorporate developmentally disabled children with their unique capacities into an educational system which already is dealing with children who display a broad range of developmental abilities and needs?

Listen to a word picture written by a famous author:

> The morning after our arrival I awoke bright and early. A beautiful summer day had dawned, the day on which I was to make the acquaintance of a somber and mysterious friend. I got up and dressed quickly and went downstairs. I meet teacher in the hall and begged to be taken to the sea at once. 'Not yet,' she responded, laughing. 'We must have breakfast first'. As soon as breakfast was over we hurried off to the shore. Our pathway led through low sandy hills and as we hastened on, I caught my feet in the low coarse grass, and tumbled laughing, in the warm shining sand. The beautiful warm air was peculiarly fragrant, and I noticed it got cooler and fresher as we went on.

This was written by a developmentally disabled person. What might be the nature of her disability? Can you really believe that this was written by a 12-year-old girl who was deaf and blind from the age of 19 months and to whom the world of written and spoken language was only open to her when she was seven after six years of silence? (Keller, 1961, p.396).

What made it possible for this remarkable human being to achieve her fame from childhood and throughout her long life? If we look carefully into her background we discover that long before the concept of "mainstreaming" was introduced, Helen Keller had the good fortune to be "mainstreamed". Locked in her silent and dark world, Helen was permitted to roam freely as a child around her country home. Here she developed to an extraordinarily high degree her senses of touch, taste, smell and kinesthesia. Once her formal education began with her beloved teacher at age 7, Helen Keller's intelligence took shape and form under the guidance of a teacher who was far ahead of her time educationally. As Annie Sullivan, better known as Teacher wrote:

> I am beginning to suspect all elaborate and special systems of education. They seem to me to be built up on the supposition that every child is a kind of idiot who must be taught to think. Whereas if the child is left to himself, he will think more and better, if less showily. Let him go and come freely, let him touch real things and combine his impressions for himself, instead of sitting indoors at a little round table, while a sweet-voiced teacher suggests that he

> build a stone wall with his wooden blocks, or make a rainbow out of strips of coloured paper, or plant straw trees in bead flower-pots (Keller, 1961, P. 277).
>
> I have tried from the beginning to talk naturally to Helen and to teach her to tell me only things that interest her and ask questions only for the sake of finding out what she wants to know. When I see that she is eager to tell me something, but is hampered because she does not know the words, I supply them and the necessary idioms, and we get along finely. The child's eagerness and interest carry her over many obstacles that would be our undoing if we stopped to define and explain everything. (Keller, p. 304)

I mention Helen Keller's story because it speaks of the tremendous growth potential present in persons with the most severe kinds of sensory deficits.

The Developmental Framework

This paper will emphasize some developmental underpinnings which can be used for diagnosis and remediation. Underscoring the concept of "mainstreaming," lies the principle of normalization--that is, looking at developmental norms which help us focus on where the child is, what he can currently do and what interventions can be useful in moving the child forward developmentally. I'd like to look with you today at the child from a psychobiological point of view---at what adaptive tasks a very young child must achieve given his endowment and given a particular environment to which he must adapt with his biological makeup. My emphasis will first be on the normal developmental progression of the child as he becomes individual in his own right. Therefore, I shall concentrate on the first three years of life for it is during this time span that the normally developing child achieves the lasting sense of an autonomous self and has developed the capacity to symbolize through language and depthful dramatic play (in Piaget's terms moving from the sensori-motor period to the pre-operational period). I will discuss the effect that developmental disabilities have on these processes. Further, I will point up the role of play as an integrative force which binds together the child's physical, emotional, psychological, social and cognitive processes and as an interventive stragegy.

The Initial Regulation Phase

During the first three months of life the infant is adapting to life outside the uterus. Lewis Sandor (1975) calls this period of "initial regulation". The baby's basic biological rhythms are becoming regularized and his family and he are learning to adapt to one another. At first the infant has little awareness of what is inside and what is outside--- his world is organized by caretakers (usually the mother) and with environmental encounters which include sights, sounds, touches, smells that become predictable through the mother's mediations.

But what of the child who lacks one or several of these senses? The blind child? The deaf child? His adaptational capacities are strained. Research on deaf children for example indicates that it is at this period when development begins to go awry. Basic regulations are not achieved and these children have difficulty with sleeping, and eating from the beginning. Their parents must do much of the adapting in order to help these children develop a sense of regularity. And this is true for children with other kinds of sensory deficits. We see some of these children later in our classrooms reacting as if life is still chaotic and unpredictable.

The Differentiation Phase. From four to six months the child begins to differentiate himself from the external world through environmental encounters with meaningful people in his life. The urgency to satisfy hunger can become postponed as the infant begins to attend to the activities that symbolize the assuagement of that hunger - the soothing sound of mother's voice, the sight of the bottle or breast, the activities that are repeated so often that the child comes to recognize them as preparatory to the feeding process. The sight of mother's face and the sound of her voice as she plays word games, makes feeding time a time for sensory intake as well as the intake of food.

Mahler (1975) refers to this period as that of "differentiation". The natural mutual play between parent and child has an essential role in beginning the separation-individuation process. Lewis Sandor (1975) has supplied a different label calling it a time of "reciprocal exchange" in which the infant/parent pair respond to each other in mutually gratifying play. Play with his own body parts and functions as well as play with the mother's body helps the child diffenentiate who he is in relation to this essential partner. There is a new look of alertness on the baby's face as he takes in every aspect of his widening world. Games of peek-a-boo arise at the time the child is diffenentiating himself from the mother as well as games of pointing out and using body parts. These games tell the child in symbolic form that "this is me and this is you".

The disabled child may not make these efforts to differentiate on his own. The playfulness around feeding and other caretaking functions may be difficult to evoke in a child with physical deficits. Such a child's physical care may be given with great seriousness by a mother who perceives her child as especially vulnerable. At this point neither parent nor child may have the energy to play during the caretaking times yet we know that the absence of such play can lead to a kind of emotional deprivation. Further, such a child will come to recognize mother as the person who meets his needs but he may cling to her with intense separation anxiety rather than attempt the forays out into the environment. Both parent and child may become locked into a serious dyad which excludes the world but may not include much joy in the interaction.

The Purposefulness Phase. From seven to nine months the normal infant begins to show more independence and directed exploration. There is an air of purposefulness about their play as they creep around, touching, tasting, feeling or as they experience periods of alert watchfulness, visually scanning their environment. Harvard studies have shown that these periods are directly related to advanced cognitive abilities at age three (Gould, 1972). During this period parents of the handicapped child must recognize that their child may need help in exploring the environment. If he cannot reach out to the environment in playful encounters, the environment must be brought to him.

The Upright Locomotion Phase. From 10 to 15 months the child's locomotor functions develop at a rapid rate. With upright locomotion being achieved, the child has a new view of the world and of himself. He can go away from mother and return. Mahler (1975) refers to this as the practicing period and quotes Greenacre in describing this as a time in which the child has a "love affair with the world" (Greenacre, 1957, p. 70.) Practicing the locomotor functions with all the physical variations continues to aid the child in realizing his potential as a person active in and on the environment. Learning about the world through physical encounters with it and learning about oneself as an effective person in this world is an important developmental task.

For the disabled child this period can be unrewarding and a time when opportunities for learning are lost. If the child cannot move about freely in his world, or if a child cannot see, he may restrict his motility or express his urge for movement in frantic random activity which appears aimless. Furthermore, in addition to practicing his emerging physical skills in active play, the infant is creating or comprehending a wide variety of symbols in the first year of life with the outstanding example of language. The child's receptive language shows his dawning capacity to deal with abstractions - that a word can stand for an object, feeling, event, person, place, or activity is an astonishing achievement available only to the human being. Prior to the time the child uses these symbols in expressive language, he uses gestural signs which again are demonstrative of the ability to interact symbolically with one's widening world. We are all familiar with the concreteness of the deaf child to whom expressive and receptive language does not come in the natural flow of development. However, the deaf child, like the hearing child does begin to use a gestural system which can be encouraged by his caretakers if he is to move into the use of symbolic expression. Words need ndt be the only way one symbolizes one's experience. Our goals at this time of life is to guide the child in symbolizing through whatever mode is available to him.

The Self Assertion Phase. From 14 to 20 months the young child is able to initiate separation and is becoming more self assertive. The era of "No" begins. Mahler (1975) refers to this period as that of "rapproachment". Having become a walker and a beginning talker, the child has a firmer sense of self which brings with it a clearer sense of who other people are. Separation anxieties arise at this time and the toddler often becomes quite clinging after having been seemingly so independent. Now he wants his parents approval and he is not always content to play alone. "Watch me" and "look at me" are two phrases which are hallmarks of this period with the unsaid message "approve of me, let me know you think I'm a good and worthwile person". Much of the child's play continues to be sensori-motor exploration with imitative dramatic play beginning. This ability to imitate indicates that the child is aware of the difference between himself and other people. He defines himself by testing the limits of what he can do, but also tries doing what other people do.

A child who is disabled may have difficulty at this stage when the sense of being a separate self is emerging. He may continue to fear separation from mother or he may rage against his parents because he cannot assert himself in the numerous ways that are available to the normally developing child. Feelings of frustration and helplessness are bound to arise at this period when the child is eager to be a doer not a passive receiver.

The Critical Second Year. The second year of life is a nodal one for all developing children. (Witness the developmental foundation Helen Keller established prior to her illness and on which she could later build.) During this year an elaborate system of symbolization has been developed. Both receptive and expressive language capacities grow, so that the child can indicate his needs, wishes and feelings symbolically rather than having always to act them out directly. Further differentiation of self from others is made possible by language - *I create the words, I see that other people, objects, and things have labels and I can use these labels in a common symbolic system that makes me a part of the world around me at the same time as I an finding that I exist separately in that world*. The era of symbolic play begins to emerge when a play act can stand for a remembered event. Furthermore the functions of other people are classified for the playing youngster as he tries out what they do in representational play acts. A tattered scarf draped over one's head can symbolize mother - the child can now tolerate mother's absence by initating her activities or appearance. A briefcase can represent daddy or mother and when lugged about endows the child with some of the attributes of power he sees all around him in those grown-ups essential for his existence. Once again as in the development of speech, such play acts indicate that the child is beginning to see other people as separate from him just as he with his growing capacity to symbolize is becoming an autonomous being. Helen Keller (1961) was described as an intent doll player. She was aware that her mother's lips moved and she would frequently touch her mother's mouth. Later she was observed touching her doll's mouth as if to see if its lips moved as well.

This capacity to symbolize may not develop for many disabled children who may become fixated in sensori-motor activities rather than stepping forward into higher levels of symbolization through speech and rudimentary dramatic play. We are all aware of those children who lack the ability to focus, whose activities seem scattered, unorganized and purposeless. It is as if these children are stuck in the sensori-motor phase which is normal part of development. If the child cannot exercise, expand and elaborate on his sensori-motor skills during the first two years of life, he may get caught up in an endless circle of repetitive activities which appear aimless and may serve only to discharge energy.

The Third Year. By the time the child is three, depthful dramatic play has begun to serve an integrative function in the symbolic process. In rudimentary dramatic play the child depicts representationally that which he has observed or experienced and in the process symbolizes both external and internal reality. To be able to produce a play action that stands for or replicates a real emotion (pretending to be angry) or event (pretending that its night time by covering oneself or a teddybear) is a further step in abstraction.

The capacity to symbolize and to use symbols in one of the hallmarks that distinguishes mankind from the rest of the animal world. Although this is open to controversy since the exciting work being done with symbols using chimpanzees, there is clear evidence that the ability to use symbols (with speech as his crowning achievement) and to abstract accords man his position on the top of the phylogenetic scale. The dominance of play during the extended childhoods of the higher animals and man speak of its importance for the ultimate success of the adults who must survive in complicated social and physical environments.

I have proposed that play, a symbolic process in itself, serves to further symbolic thought processes (e.g., problem solving, hypothesis generating and dealing with abstractions). Without this capacity to symbolize, none of us could survive in our highly technical society which requires a high level of symbolization to function even at a minimum level: follow a recipe, plan our work day, balance a check book, make change, dial a phone number, read and answer our mail. Further I propose that play can provide the answer toward symbolization and can be a useful and even essential curricular tool in enhancing the symbolic process.

The developmental framework which I have described involves some of the processes by which the child separates and individuates and the influences disabling conditions may have on these processes. Further I have traced the progress the child makes toward abstract thinking during the first three years of life and function of dramatic play in the symbolic process. For those of you who are parents and teachers of children with developmental disabilities, such a framework may be useful in helping you design interventive strategies. As play is the way every child learns his world and his place in that world, we can devise appropriate experiences which are suitable for the developmental level of the child and which incorporate playful modes that all children utilize.

For example, for the child who appears completely disorganized and chaotic even in the basic living tasks such as eating and sleeping, we may need to begin by organizing his world for him much as a mother does for a baby in the first three months of life. In other words, the child may extend the normal period of initial regulation (Sandor, 1975). Creating a predictable environment for the child includes keeping materials in predictable spots, having routines which seldom vary and using you body as a safe home base may assist a severely regressed child in developing the basic regularity that most very young infants achieve as a matter of course.

If a child demonstrates that he has little if any sense of who he is in relation to the rest of the world, one can speculate that the period of differentiation presents difficulties. Such children do not seem to recognize themselves in a mirror, have difficulty with the pronouns "I" or "me" and seem incapable of concentrated attention. One may need to play with such a child much as a mother would with a four to six month old baby - encouraging mutual body play - touching the child's body parts and permitting the child to explore your face, hair, jewelry and clothing. Games of peek-a-boo are useful, as is using the mirror, in which the child sees two people - himself and you with the end goal being to diffenentiate "This is you and this is me".

Depending on the type of sensory deficit, bringing the world to the child may be necessary if the child has missed those essential environmental explorations that occur naturally for the normally developing child during the second half of the first year and when walking ordinarily begins. The introduction of adaptive physical equipment is essential if children are to experience the world as fully as possible. Annie Sullivan, for example, conducted most of her lessons with Helen Keller out of doors. They rambled freely in the rural neighborhood and Helen was permitted to climb, run, play in the creek building dams, discovering stones. All of her senses were used to sample what nature had to offer and she developed a lifelong appreciation for the sounds, smells and feel of her world (Keller, 1961).

For the disabled child who missed the very early exploratory play common to children who ordinarily become mobile through creeping and walking, the use of natural materials which make up the real world should be encouraged in play; sand, water, clay, mud, dirt, stones, and seeds can and should be used with these children. For those who understand speech, one may need to keep up a running explanatory conversation of what is going on around them.

If such a child is in a classroom with essentially normal children, it may be necessary for the teacher to serve as an organizer much as the mother does during the motor practicing period of 9-15 months (Mahler, 1975). This is done by labeling which helps focus everyday experiences. "Johnny and Mark are playing doctor. Johnny is using the stethoscope. It makes Mark laugh - maybe it tickles". Such labeling gives focus to the child's experience which may have seemed quite disorganized at the time when life experiences begin to get focused for the normally developing child.

Difficult though it may be, if we deal with children whose only way of defining themselves is through negativism, we know that such children are making the autonomy assertions expected of youngsters between 14 and 20 months of age. Such signs of autonomy must be encouraged along with play that reflects back to the child that he is an effective and worthwile person. For example, you may find yourself dealing with a disabled child whose primary mode of interaction is passive or even quite active resistance. To set up a power struggle with such a child would nip what may be his only avenue for defining himself as a person. He may be saying behaviorally "I can't control how I walk or talk, so I will control what I can". For such children intervention must be undertaken in the style that works best with the autonomy striving toddler. One must set up situations where he can be the successful initiator, can control blocks, pegs, simple puzzles, sand, crayons, dolls, stuffed toys, even hammer and nails, depending on the nature of disabilities. For these children, we concentrate on what they can do; play opportunities provide the avenue for positive experiences. Too many routines, rules and adult expectations can deepen resistance and create continued power struggles. Recall the famous battles between Teacher and Helen Keller, as Helen asserted her autonomy and Teacher delineated what was acceptable (that is, innumerable learning opportunities through play with natural materials) and what was not (throwing food, snatching toys and hurting other people).

The Gifted Child

The gifted child may traverse these developmentally stages more quickly. Many gifted children are recognized by their advanced developmental accomplishments, their excellent physical and mental endowments, and their eagerness for environmental encounters. However, we may not recognize giftedness in those children who have difficulty in modulating their capacity for intake. We must be alert to the fact that such children are often extremely sensitive and alert to all kinds of stimulation to which they may react with what appears to be disorganization or withdrawal. In their responsiveness as young infants, for example, they may evoke a great deal of responsiveness from others and in the process absorb so much stimulation that the only means of discharge can be frantic crying or frantic activities. Other children of this type may learn to monitor stimulus intake and appear to be sluggish when indeed they are synthesizing and integrating as much stimulation as they can handle.

We are all familiar with Thomas Edison's slow speech and Einstein's difficulties with the school system. If we truly favor individualized instruction we will recognize that these children in their cognitive growth cycles as described by Elkind do a great deal of "stimulus nutriment seeking" (Elkind, 1976). Opportunities must be provided to satisfy their intense curiosity, their drive to explore and experiment, their capacities for creative thinking and their need to reflect and absorb.

Giftedness, as you well know, may be masked by reaction to the frustrations which such children encounter in both home and school environments which are too restrictive or in some cases too stimulating for those children who cannot monitor well their capacity for intake. Children in the latter group may appear hyperactive and will need adult help in structuring, defining and channeling their experiences.

As the child nears the third year of life, we look for signs of beginning symbolic play: 1) some make-believe role, 2) some verbalization related to this role, 3) persistence in the role for at least five minutes, 4) some make believe with toys, 5) some make believe with situations, 6) more than one person involved in the play (Smilansky, 1968). If these signs are absent in older children with whom parents and/or teachers work, there are ways to teach pretend play through modeling and active participation in role play with children. Sara Smilansky (1968) has provided us with a guide for assessing which elements of dramatic play should be present in sociodramatic play. Once one determines which elements are absent, then one can move in to help the child add these elements to his play repertoire. One such element is "pretend in relation to objects." Most normal three-year-olds can do this. If a child cannot, this can be taught through direct modeling as the teacher actually enters into play with the child. "Pretend this is a telephone." This helps the child begin to move beyond the concrete to the abstract with the illustration from his teacher or caretaker that it's all right and even fun to pretend.

The idea of diagnosing the child's developmental level and building on the skills of that particularly developmental period is not new. Let us learn once again from Helen Keller's beloved Teacher:

> I have decided not to try to have regular lessons for the present. I am going to treat Helen exactly like a two-year-old child. It occured to me the other day that it is absurd to require a child to come to a certain place at a certain time and recite certain lessons, when he has not yet acquired a working vocabulary. I sent Helen away and say down to think. I asked myself, 'How does a normal child learn language?' The answer was simple, 'By imitation.' The child comes into the world with the ability to learn, and he learns of himself, provided he is supplied with sufficient outward stimulus. He sees people do things, and he tries to do them. He hears others speak, and he tries to speak. But long before he utters his first word, he understands what is said to him. I have been obserbving Helen's little cousin lately. She is about fifteen months old, and already understands a great deal. In response to questions she points out prettily her nose, mouth, eye, chin, cheek, ear. If I say, 'Where is baby's other ear?' she points it out correctly. If I hand her a flower, and say, 'Give it to mamma,' she takes it to her mother. If I say, 'Where is the little rogue?' she hides behind her mother's chair, or covers her face with her hands and peeps out at me with an expression of genuine roguishness. She obeys many commands like these: 'Come,' Kiss,' Go to papa,' 'Shut the door,' 'Give me the biscuit.' But I have not heard her try to say any of these words, although they have been repeated hundreds of times in her hearing, and it is perfectly evident that she understands them. These observations have given me a clue to the method to be followed in teaching Helen language. I shall talk into her hand as we talk into the baby's ears. I shall assume that she has the normal child's capacity of assimilation and imitation. I shall use complete sentences in talking to her, and fill out the meaning with gestures and her descriptive signs when necessity requires it; but I shall not try to keep her mind fixed on any one thing. I shall do all I can to interest and stimulate it, and wait for results. (Keller, 1961, pp. 274-275)

We all know what those results were. Helen Keller not only learned to speak, read and write English beautifully, but she also was able to learn French, Latin, and Greek. Her world was made richer because of her ability to be a participant in it in spite of the silence and darkness and our world certainly has been richer through the example of her life.

With this basic developmental approach both parents and teachers can participate and cooperate in order to move the child forward. Most of the strategies that I have described certainly involve activities which are more commonly engaged by parents during the very early developmental stages. On the whole, teachers are more used to and more comfortable with educational techniques which are geared to the child's cognitive capacities. Readiness for such educational techniques is based on the child's developmental status. Therefore, parents and teachers must enter into a partnership in which the strengths of each are recognized and respected. Too often the "blaming game" takes place on both sides. "He's spoiled," says the teacher. "His teachers don't understand him," groans the parent. Antagonism between parents and teachers is breaking down with the recognition that each can be more effective with the help of the other. But when faced with an extremely difficult child whose progress for some reason is impeded, both teacher and parent still tend to assign blame to one another rather than work together to locate the problem and develop effective solutions.

When dealing with children with special needs, mutual respect for one another's roles is essential. Think of the approach Annie Sullivan used with Helen Keller and her parents. For a time she had to intrude on the family circle which was protecting Helen but not facilitating her growth. Her empathy for the child and for her parents and their respect for her competence enable them to work together for the child's common good. (Keller, 1961) Teachers, then, need to have empathy for parents who have had to deal with their own hurts and inadequacies while facing the daily hurdles of dealing with a disabled child whose physical and emotional problems can at times seem overwhelming. Parents, too, need to recognize that teachers may have a number of such children who require individual handling for a variety of problems and that they too may be occasionally overwhelmed by feelings of hopelessness and helplessness. A mutual support system built by parents and teachers can be effective in raising the self-esteem of parents, teachers, and children in their care.

Summary

We want to enrich the lives of all the children with whom we work. As we recognize that all children have special needs and capacities, we will be challenged to use our creativity and ingenuity. I have highlighted the use of playful interaction with children as a means of remediating developmental lags which may occur in a variety of disabling conditions as well as enhancing the creativity of gifted children. Further, I conclude by reiterating that the capacity for depthful dramatic play is a prerequisite for learning to deal with abstract symbols such as letters and numbers. Further the facilitating of such play has often been discouraged in favor of introducing letters and numbers earlier and earlier in the child's life as if these are the

the only symbols worth dealing with. I have described the richness of a symbolic world that can be explored by children in age-appropriate ways which not only enhance their capacity to learn but widen and nourish their lives.

In the most affluent country in the world, children today are faced with problems many of us have never had to deal with. Problems such as broken families resulting in the isolation of parent/child pairs without the support of larter family units; a rising rate of child abuse; a higher survival rate of children born with a wide range of disabilities; the use of television as surrogate mother, baby sitter and friend; and a cultural attitude that welfare and education budgets should be trimmed such "frills" as enriched early childhood programs face today's children. Most of us as citizens feel frustrated in our attempts to deal with these massive societal problems which intimately affect children. However, as parents and teachers, we can exercise our prerogagives by supplying the best possible education for the young children in our care. Children need the time, the equipment, the space and above all our knowledge of developmental processes as well as our encouragement and facilitation to become involved in the sort of depthful dramatic play which will permit them to symbolize creatively, intelligently, and playfully.

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READING DIFFICULTIES THAT PERSIST AT ALL LEVELS

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The phrase "at all levels" establishes a scope that seems boundless. However, when one reflects on the nature of the reading process, attention tends to focus on the term "Process". This, in turn, should help one realize that the "process" is cognitive and is similar at all levels. Because this is so, the nature of the difficulties readers experience are also very similar at all levels.

The Reading-Thinking Process

Before identifying major difficulties experienced by readers, especially those who falter, it is timely to re-examine the question, "What is Reading?". That reading is a process and not a product or subject is a readily recognized truth. Reading elicits a way of thinking. The miracle lies in the conception and processing of ideas and not in the externalization of words and sentences.

The Reading-Thinking process is always a processing of ideas. What varies is the age-related capabilities and curiosities of readers and the nature and difficulty of the material. Reading, like reality, contains actions (cognitive actions) as well as ideas, verbs as well as substantives, life and nature as well as matter.

Yet current reading instruction remains largely primitive in methods and techniques. Education is not the transmission of a body of knowledge, but rather the development of a logical habit of mind and the drawing forth of potential values (Bruner, 1966). This means that particularly in reading instruction the development of an intellectual conscience is essential; one that begins with problems, tests answers and believes only up to the evidence at hand. Reading is not the sounding of letters, the isolation of words perceptually, or a misleading copy of physics. Reading is like a stream, a continuity of perception and feeling, it is transitive and dynamic and flows from agent to object and back again.

Instruction in the reading process must reflect this and be pragmatic. It must turn the face of thought to cognitive action and to understanding. In brief, reading instruction must be conceived as the directing of a thinking process that not merely prepares for maturity and for refined thinking habits, but promotes a continuous growth of the mind and a continuous illumination of life. Reading instruction must cause the reader to look forward to utility and to consequences.

The first distinguishing characteristic of the reading-thinking act is "What is the problem?" Purpose, is to reading efficiency what air is to human life. To paraphrase Nietzsche, to have purpose is the final patent of nobility, the formula of superman. (Nietzsche, no date). Purpose setting, or raising questions, when coupled with intention, provides access to the kingdom of the mind, is the whip of conscience, and brings the reader face to face with a problem and with decision making.

To raise questions requires self-examination and effort. It results in a lifting up of the power of the mind to reason as over against impulsive or slothful thinking and/or preemptory teacher questions. To raise questions requires a reader to examine what he thinks he knows and what he wants to know additionally. This self-examination is the starting point in the pursuit of knowledge. The Greeks said, "Know thyself". This kind of reckoning establishes not only reader steersmanship, but also the nature (reader efficiency) of the course to be pursued.

The raising of questions is only one-half of the task. The thinking reader who braves the demanding risks of thought doesn't stop there. Readers' interests are quickened and sublimated by their hopes. And so they speculate about likely answers. They extrapolate from their experience and knowledge and leap ahead (feed forward) to what may be the likely answer. In reality, to reach out and predict is to examine the consequences to which questions lead in action, otherwise the feed forward process is fruitless. So every thinking reader begins to realize why Socrates said that a question well asked is half the answer.

Readers who approach the reading task armed by their own questions and predictions are off with the speed of hope in the pursuit of ideas. For them the reading process is not a devitalized, mechanistic or mystic process, but a vitalization of the mind. Ideas are dynamic, are change, are action and involve choice and testing. The reader who pursues his or her own ideas acquires agility and adroitness, artistry and scope, federation and daring.

In one flash of thought we can walk on the moon, or circle the earth, or circumnavigate Titan, the fabulous moon of Saturn. That is the power of the mind, the empiricism of epistemology, the dynamics of reading. The miracle of reading resides in the pursuit of ideas and not in the linear arrangement of words, or the atomistic character of letters and letters of words. Reading is a dynamic porcess whose base is mental action, intentionally started in pursuit of certain purposes or questions - questions that have both personal value and predictive value. As a matter of fact, this is the dynamism of life with its numerous daily predictions, anticipations and choices and appears native to the human mind. To a good degree it also appears to be a product of the social transmission of mental habits.

When the art of reading is conceived as described, then the term "reading comprehension" leaves the impression of redundancy. To read is to comprehend. Reading is a quest for meaning, a testing of answers, a true empiricism of the human mind.

Reading Difficulties

This account of the reading process points to a three way classification of difficulties. First, even though it is true that the reading-thinking process is virtually the same at all levels, there are certain difficulties that tend to develop at the initial learning-to-read phase. Second, there are difficulties that persist for all readers, even the very able.

Initial Reading Difficulties. Most of the difficulties that occur when children are first introduced to reading instruction stem from the fact that the meaningful use of printed language is largely ignored. This is true whether basal reader instruction materials are used with 4 and 5-year olds or with 6- and 7-year olds.

> The language of pre-primers is notoriously stereotyped, almost totally meaningless, awkwardedly structured, and artificial. Many have ridiculed the "look, Dick, look" approach as barren. This includes authors of such programs and even those who give "tongue-in-cheek" support. Yet surveys of reading programs being used throughout the country show that 80 to 85% of the schools use such basal materials. (Stauffer, 1969, p.35)

Most bright children learn the limited number of words readily but are annoyed and bored by the distorted language and the contrived plotless structures. Average students muddle along and usually by sheer rote repetition memorize the vocabulary. But they, too, despair either openly or intuitively to the materials and recommended instructional practices. As a result for these children reading lacks motivation and negative attitudes are often acquired. At no time in these kinds of programs do children have the opportunity ot develop the concept of reading as thinking, as a facet of communication. Unfortunately this lack lays the foundation for reading difficulties in later years.

The children who are not as bright as those already mentioned experience difficulty because of their attempt at rote memorization. For them the high frequency repetition fails to off-set the lack of meaning and the awkward language structures.

Attempts at altering the language usage to provide an alliterative or rhythmically phonetic-syntactical base violates sound usage even more. "Can Dan fan Nan" offers no more meaning than does "Lood, Dick, Look". Both approaches depend largely on rote recognition and recall, and ignore the richness and vitality of natural and functional language.

Equally as unfortunate is the fact that use of such unnatural language structure does not provide a reader with either a language base or a plot base for making predictions. Thus from the very beginning of reading instruction skills essential to the reading-thinking processing of ideas is ignored. As a result "reading" becomes an oral reading, word-by-word calling devoid of meaning.

Even so, these beginning basal reader materials were so structured in an attempt to provide some naturalness of communcation and to provide a whole word base for teaching phonic analysis skills. The publishers and authors were bringing into question the ABC method whereby reading was taught exclusively as a way of first memorizing the alphabet and then synthesizing letters into combinations and finally into words. This ABC approach overlooked almost entirely the fact that language, whether oral or written, was created by mankind to communicate. Even so, both the basal reader method and the synthetic or intensive phonic method failed to utilize the basic purpose of language. As a result, the extension of language from oral to written communication has floundered.

That these methods were denounced by Rousseau and others in the 18th century, Horace Mann and others in the 19th century, and Edmuch Burke Huey and others in the 20th century makes it difficult to believe that the uncritical acceptance of these so-called traditional assumptions have prevailed for so long. (Stauffer, 1969, p.35).

As a matter of fact, in the 1960's and 1970's there has been a large scale turn toward intensive phonics. This insistence on the application of physical concepts of mechanization in the field of thought shows how inappropriate such concepts of physics are in the world of language structure.

These approaches are based almost entirely on rote memory devoid of meaning. Remembering as a tool of thinking must not be underestimated. However, memory is an accretion; and in the procedures described (intensive isolated phonics and basal reader instructional recommendations) other mental abilities that should be fostered are ignored. Students taught by these approaches proceed word-by-word in order to deal perceptually with each word and in a vain attempt to remember all the facts and ideas presented. Teacher questioning is the primary directional procedure. Pupil parroting of answers is the expected. Lines are read orally on occasion, not so much to prove points, but as a measure of oral reading accuracy. However, unity is based on the ability to develop forethought, to raise questions, to make judgments, to analyze and classify, to create, to reason and to internalize.

It behooves us, therefore, to direct reading instruction in such a way that these unity of mind capacities are utilized and developed. To do this language usage must reflect its natural stages and be based both on the desire to communicate and the experience and language power of the children. In short, reader intention becomes the reading-thinking process imperative.

This is best done through utilization and enhancement of pupil experiences and the language capability they have to grasp experiences and communicate about them - or, in brief, the Language-Experience Approach to reading instruction (Stauffer, 1980). It is through pupils' cognitive actions upon experiences and their language interactions with each other that sound basic reading skills and favorable attitudes are best fostered.

In this approach, the range of diffenences among typical 4-, 5-, and 6-year olds can best be acknowledged, harnessed and made operative. The Language-Experience Approach instructional activities are global in nature and comprehension and word attack skills are taught based on communication dynamics. This is done by capitalizing on the bond between words, actions and ideas.

The produced and reproduced accounts of children's dictations provide a bona fide word recognition circumstance. When a child does not immediately recognize the printed form of a word or words he or she dictated, the instructional circumstance is latent with teaching and learning opportunity. First, the power of closure on a word or interpolation can be exercised. Second, because the child is the author, the language structure and the concepts aid and abet recognition. When this first hand recognition dynamics is paralled with intensive word attack skill training, skill acquisition is almost definitely assured.

From these initial stages to books becomes a ready transition. In addition, written communication occurs early and in a natural sequence as the facets of language are developed functionally and in unison. In brief, the language arts serve as a means of communication (social centrics) and to facilitate thinking and action (personal).

Remedial Type Difficulties. Each year a very small proportion of children reaching compulsory attendance school age comprise a population requiring very special clinical help. These are the children burdened with neurological (dyslexic) and/or emotional disabilities or both that precipitate reading failures (Stauffer, 1978). This is especially true when early diagnosis either does not occur or does not lead to adjustment of instructional practices or learning expectancies.

However, by far the larger number who become reading failures with varying marked degrees of disability are the result of pedagogocal and social-cultural shortcomings. These children are indeed the victims of our society's ineptitude - a society that knows better. School authorities are as much at fault as teacher, and it is their incompetence that burdens many children with the label "failure".

Malpractices that are reprehensible are lock-step methods, rote memorization, intensive phonic instruction of letters and sounds in isolation, over dependence on isolated skillbook type activities; the use of boxed activities that are supposed to work equally well with any child anywhere; excessive and purposeless round-robin oral reading; inadequately prepared teachers; insufficient and inadequate media centers; well intentioned but unqualified teacher aides; inadequate attention to perceptual and emotional difficulties; inadequate attention to children's varying developing ages and rates of development.

So-called remedial reading instruction usually is not initiated until children are nine years old or older. This delay is justified invariably on the grounds that either further maturation is all that is needed or that "another try" with "another teacher" will be the antidote. By the time children are nine years old they have had at least three, maybe four years of such antidotes, have had "specialized" help during school hours, after school, Saturdays and summers.

Each year such children are re-exposed to the same kinds of materials and methods. Even though this re-exposure fails to work, many clinics and so-called remedial teachers compound the circumstances by doing the same kinds of things. They justify their actions on the ground that these practices will work when the disabled reader is taught individually. Accordingly, most clinics are built with small rooms large enough to house only a teacher and a pupil. These isolation booths remind one of death row solitary confinement cells. The walls are bare, the furniture painfully simple. Add to this the fact that usually one wall has a one-way viewing window so that observation (spying) can be done and anyone can readily see how dreadful a curcumstance these settings become.

It is little wonder that these children begin to doubt themselves most seriously. In many ways their predicament is more tragic than that of the deaf or the blind. The handicaps of deafness and blindness are so apparent that most folks make some allowance. On the other hand, the non-reader usually has no apparent defects and as a result is expected to achieve in a way similar to that of typical children.

Beyond question most of these children acquire the dulling tread of captive beings and reflect the ugliness of their numerous days of failure. The acuteness of their problems leaves them blighted and depressed. Yet one senses among these afflicted a vitality, a desire to achieve, an almost indescribable independence of spirit.

This is the spirit that can be harnessed. This will, this determination can give substance to motives and ends. All of these children can think and feel and this is what gives them identity with their peers and mankind in general. Their world is just as much a medly of sights, sounds, tastes, smells, feelings, and pressures as that of the successful acheiver. All can and do think of themselves and have a "self-image". Their past, their environment, their circumstances, their frustrations influence their actions. Behind and beneath their actions is a feeling shame, a sense of guilt. Yet, there persists a will to achieve, to dignify their lives, to have noble goals. These children are not a mess or a blighted hope. They are and can be a delight. Invariably they have a good sense of humor, are young, strong and willing to overcome.

These are the children society has failed. These are the children in need of both pedagogocal and therapeutical adjustment of instruction. Here there is a need for warm, sympathetic understanding of emotional needs without instruction that is patronizing and solicitous. The instruction must be firm but fair and sober. Everyone, but especially a person who has experienced failure wants a confidant, a person who listens attentively and not condescendingly, who asks insightful and thoughtful questions, who is sympathetic. A qualified teacher can provide this. The instructor and pupil must have "no secrets". Always a pupil must know why he or she is engaged in an activity and how it will prove helpful.

Instructional procedures for the neurologically impaired or dyslexic usually require adjustment that utilizes kinesthetic and tactile neural pathways, as well as visual and auditory. The association disability varying in degree of complexity and kind (visual or auditory or both) poses a challenge; but only to the unqualified instructor. The failure of these children invariably is intensified by emotional anxieties that result from inability to associate and remember. Teaching these children is not a task for self-declared remedial reading teachers.

Most successful is the Grace Fernald technique. She recommended practical action-type activities that utilized the senses and resulted as well in intellectual development (Fernald, 1943). She, too, activated instruction by having pupils dictate and then use their dictation word-by-word as a source for kinesthetic-tactile word learning. Thus pupil language and experience provided the base.

Her kinesthetic-sensory tracing methods enable a teacher to use phonics (although she never did), whole word practices, semantic practices and particularly pupil curiosity. In brief, her procedures represent a modified and adapted Language-Experience approach to remedial reading instruction. Such procedures are discussed at length in four chapters of a professional book I structured and co-authored. (Stauffer, Abrams, and Pikulski, 1978)

The children in need of remedial type help but unimpaired by neurological difficulties also benefit most from an instructional program made viable by utilizing the experiences and language of the children. This permits an instructor to gear instructicn to a learner's rate, capacity, maturity and interests.

These young people possess a large vocabulary, have had numerous experiences, and indeed are curious about the world around. Frequently, because of school difficulties, they have focused attention on things, events, places and even people. Their curiosities run to birds, trees, snakes, animals, mechanics, space, inventions, sports. They are rich in so many ways. Needed most is to involve them in things they can do - action type activities. To act upon things or ideas is the best stimulus for dictation. This way the ideas, the language usage, the illustrations represent their experience, knowledge and language power.

In brief, what is most functional pedagogically is an Inquiry Reading Approach (Stauffer, 1980, chapters 8,9) and a modified Fernald Approach (Stauffer, Abrams and Pikulski, 1978, chapters 11, 12, 13). In addition, it is especially helpful if these children can work with other so that they may share ideas, projects and materials. For them reading may always be slow and almost word by word; but they can read, acheive and be successful students. Above all, these children require us to instruct with "an appearance of truth on all things". The talents and ambitions, courage and open mindedness of these children can be preserved, utilized and extended.

General Difficulties. I have yet to meet the perfect reader. Almost all people seem dissatisfied with their capabilities. The most common source of irritability is time or a very slow rate of reading.

Of course there are among us some fantastic readers and there probably always will be. Theodore Roosevelt averaged two books a day even while in the White House. Bertrand Russell amazed people by his rate of reading. John Kennedy performed at a spectacular pace. Senator Proxmire is an exceedingly fast reader. Not only have these people and others like them read very rapidly but also they possessed fabulous memories. Of course, most of the persons who perform so spectacularly are highly talented people, many of them being in the genius class. Since the majority of us are not in this high class, it does not mean that we are forever doomed to a snails pace word-by-word reading. We are not.

But reading inefficiency is the number one problem of most otherwise able readers. Most people read along on a linear word-by-word congestion basis and get bogged down by the sheer piling up of words and the burdensome struggle to pursue ideas. The trees get in their way and they have great trouble seeing the forest.

What is even more disconcerting is the fact that we tend to read everything in the same way - word-by-word. It does not matter whether one is reading light fiction, the classics, nonfiction of a general nature, specialized nonfiction, or newspapers, magazines, or books - always we read word-by-word.

The fact that most people read this way is indeed a serious indictment of reading instruction and accountability. The methods being used so widely are in serious question. For too long "letter sounding" as an approach to word recognition and "oral reading" as a measure of achievement have prevailed. Needed is a clear and definitive focus on word learning as functional conceptualization with reading achievement measured by reader purpose and the nature and difficulty of the material. This is the last quarter of the 20th century, the print-out prospects for the electronic-computerized 21st century are so vast that we can no longer afford to be saddled with 16th century procedures.

In turn, the word-by-word inner speech procedure is largely responsible for our poor listening habits. Readers, preoccupied with mouthing each word, time after time reach the end of a page and remember nothing. Why? Because they have not been listening and have been "word-gathering". Not only have they by-passed the cerebral cortex, but also the oral-aural connections.

Versatility in reading can be taught and can be achieved even by the masses. From the very beginning, reading instruction must focus on meaning and purpose and be based on learner experiences, interests and knowledge. Phonics must assume its functional role as an auxiliary aid to comprehension. Reader purpose must be the guide that keeps a reader on course and helps him to adjust so as to skim, or scan, or studyread or obtain an over-view (Stauffer and J. Berg, 1977). Inquiry reading and Directed Reading-Thinking Activities must dominate reading instruction (Stauffer, 1980; Stauffer, 1969).

Next to reader inefficiency the greatest universal affliction is inadequate concept development. Not only do readers skip words they don't know but also they indulge in a naive form of guessing, labeled by some as linguistic guessing. Seldom are readers trained to stop and determine the meaning of a word. In brief, our dictionary habits in conjunction with command of the psychological principles of closure and interpolation are outrageously shameful.

In the 1930's Ernest Horn (1937) and his graduate students made revealing studies of inadequate erroneous concepts. Numerous examples could be cited, but one will suffice. In a discussion in a fourth grade of the fact that there were no matches available in 1763 occurred the statement "..the most primitive way of starting a fire had to be used". The meanings the fourth graders gave for "primitive" ranged from "the only" to "a most dangerous". Horn called these types of responses "howlers" and this is a most apt label. This, I suppose is linguistic guessing at its best, or could it be at its worst?

In addition, many words have multiple meanings. The common word run has over a hundred meanings. Idiomatically the common word get has well over a hundred different uses.

Determining the attributes and potentials of a concept is an arduous task and requires constant devotion. Concepts fit into a class of concepts (maple, deciduous, tree). Concepts have synonyms and antonyms with shades of meaning. Humdrum as irksome, tiresome, dull; or the opposite, gay, lively, exciting. Haziness and misconceptions are not confined to elementary school children. Adults are equally as guilty.

The triple relationship of a word to its context, to the reader's experience, and to the reader's purpose must be understood. It is true that by and large the meaning to be attached to a word is determined first, by its sentence context and second, by its general paragraph and page context. It is also true that the reader may have 1), no meaning for a word such as longitude or 2), a vague meaning, or 3), a meaning that doesn't fit, or 4), may actually know the correct meaning but fail to use it(Horn, 1937).

Concept development must be initiated as early as possible (kindergarten) in a learner's life and be pursued vigorously thereafter. Most important is the clear recognition of the need by both teachers and students. Numerous means are available for clarifying and enriching ideas, but they must be exacted.

When to these two liabilities: lack of reading efficiency and inadequate concept development, we add inability of readers to set purposes, to act upon information, to read widely and intensively, we can see readily that many among us are seriously handicapped. It is crucial indeed that our instructional practices be alerted accordingly. We don't need a decade of declaring everyone's "right to read". What is needed is a decade of vitalized, efficient, viable instruction.

In Conclusion

The title, "Reading difficulties that persist at all levels" establishes a dimension that is comprehensible by rendering a more to-the-point three way classification. First, the difficulties that tend to develop at the initial learning to read phase. Strikingly evident at this stage is the failure to teach reading as a facet of the language arts created by mankind to communicate. Isolated word attack skill training dominates and pupils do not learn how valuable an auxiliary aid to comprehension phonics can be. Word-by-word reading results in extremely slow rates. Excessive oral reading produces word callers. Pupil attitudes toward reading are either very negative or at best unenthusiastic.

Second, remedial type difficulties develop among the dyslexic and among the numerous pedagogical failures. Most of these children are fed and re-fed the same instructional dose as was provided in the first learning-to-read phase. As a result, they acquire very negative attitudes toward reading, severly tarnished self-images, and a compounding of the failures already set forth.

Third, the general difficulties that afflict even the good readers, are reading inefficiency, inadequate concept development, inability for readers to be self-regulative and failure to read reflectively.

Thus we can see that the difficulties that persist at all levels even though stemming from different circumstances are not only similar but are compounded year by year. None of this need be true. Malpractices of lockstep instruction, rote memorization, phonic instruction isolated from meaning, mass produced skill books supposed to fit every person, purposeless oral reading, have been denounced since the time of John Locke, Rousseau, Horace Mann, Edmund B. Huey and others.

We know what to do to off-set this. Needed first is an adjustment in methodology. Reading is a mental process and it must be taught as such. Directed Reading-Thinking instruction must replace out-moded 16th century practices. Pupils' experiences and language must provide the foundation for language arts instruction, not only at the early stages but throughout. Inquiry reading skills must be taught. And, above all, reading efficiency training must be taught to offset the deadening, stifling, word-by-word reading.

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STRATEGY-BASED READING INSTRUCTION

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Despite tremendous efforts made to improve reading achievement in our schools, 10 to 30 per cent of the student population fails to read at satisfactory levels (Bond and Tinker, 1973; Harris and Sipay, 1975; Karlin, 1975). The percentage range reflects three factors: 1) the variance among writers as they describe failure; 2) a stability over time of the number of students identified as failures; and students among those who fail to read as well as expected include slow, average and gifted learners.

This paper describes a reader-centered, comprehension-focused approach to teaching reading. It is reader-centered in that instruction and practice is determined on the basis of the individual reader's current reading needs as reflected in the pattern of strategies while reading. The approach is comprehension-focused in that the reader is always encouraged to view his/her reading behavior as a meaning-generating activity. First, a rationale for addressing unique needs is presented. Then strategy-based reading instruction is described with guidelines and selected strategies.

The Case For Uniqueness

Operating on the assumption that individuals are more alike than they are different, we as educators (and others who provide service to large populations) tend to capitalize on likinesses. We identify the common instructional needs our students exhibit and organize course content and our teaching methods to meed those needs. By focusing our educational energies on those common needs we reason that we reach more students and are more efficient teachers. In other words, our concern for efficiency has led us to expend most of our effort on learners exhibiting a pool of similar needs and little or no instructional effort on those having needs that are different or unique. Yet, there is some evidence that instructional focus on common rather than unique needs yields less than satisfactory results.

Dunkin and Biddle (1974) in summarizing research on teaching concluded that supervised small group instruction through flexible grouping correlated positively with high achievement generally. The conclusion suggests that unique needs are likely to be met in small group interaction where there is a chance for more individual learner-teacher contact. Similarly, in an investigation noting reading teacher behavior, Blair (1976) concluded that students of teachers who used differentiated instruction produced higher reading achievement scores than students of teachers in similar circumstances who did not use such methods. Differentiated instruction in this instance included flexible grouping within a class and the matching of student needs to specific instructional techniques. Here again, addressing specific needs manifested by individuals as they worked in small groups proved to have a positive uniqueness need not be sacrificed for efficiency.

However, the argument for giving attention to the 10 to 30 percent of our students who have historically been labelled failures as readers, can also be extended to include those apparently successful readers who perform at grade level but still lack sufficient skill to read as well as they can. Accurate assessment of their needs might well reveal that they also are in need of special attention often overlooked in our attempt to address whole-class instructional needs. The information gathered from such an assessment might well suggest that if we capitalize on each of our students' uniquenesses, we are likely to see increased evidence of higher achievement for all of our students. Capitalizing on uniqueness, after all, may be our most efficient approach to instruction. To accomplish this task in reading, strategy-based instruction is recommended.

Strategy-Based Instruction

Some readers benefit from comprehension instruction that directs them to find the main idea, assess a character's motives, or note the sequence of a set of details. We tell those readers what to do and they devise a strategy to figure out how to do it. Yet many readers suffer silently and painfully when we tell them what but not how to complete reading assignments. These readers often give up or guess their way through assignments with undependable results. They need to develop a set of dependable strategies that can be applied independently and productively.

At the heart of strategy-based instruction is the deliberate act of capitalizing on a reader's unique strategy pattern. Strategy is defined in this context as reader-initiated effort to solve a reading comprehension problem based on "information and expectations developed and organized...from past experiences in order to deal with similiar new experiences..." (Barr, 1974-1975, p. 560). Strategy-based instruction utilizes the reader's individual strategy pattern as a guide for determining how to make sense of written material. Productive strategies or those that lead to clear communication between writer and reader are identified and practiced. Unproductive strategies are modified or eliminated. Strategy-based instruction makes the reader aware of information and expectations about written material he already has at his/her disposal and helps him/her to modify and expand those to become a more competent comprehender.

Evidence of specific strategy use by individual readers has been reported in several studies (Biggs, 1977; Olshavsky, 1976-1977; Robinson, 1967). Readers were found to systematically search the context for meaning when confronted with a new or unfamiliar word; sound out words; guess at word meanings based on vaguely familiar word parts; read and reread phrases, sentences, paragraphs or total passages that made little sense to them (Biggs, 1977). Some of these strategies proved to be productive, in that they led the reader to "make sense" of the written material while other strategies proved to be unproductive and led to little or no understanding and possible frustration with the reading task (Biggs, 1977).

Interestingly, a reader does not always recognize whether or not the use of a particular strategy is effective for his or her reading. Ames (1966, 1970) determined in a study of readers' use of context, that individual readers often employ productive strategies least often and unproductive strategies most often. For example, though readers achieved a 90 percent success rate when they used knowledge of the question-answer paragraph structure to aid comprehension, they seldom used that strategy. On the other hand, readers frequently sought clues to meaning from strings of related words, yet achieved a success rate of less than 50 percent using this relatively unproductive strategy. Studies demonstrating that a reader's knowledge of his or her personal strategy use can lead to improved reading. This assumption underlies the suggestions offered in this paper (Biggs, 1977; Jacobson, 1974).

Implementing Strategy-Based Instruction

An important element of strategy-based instruction is the identification of the unique strategy pattern a reader used in attempts to comprehend. Historically, the most common way of monitoring silent reading comprehension behavior has been through introspection. Typical of the various investigations reported in the literature, subjects are asked to read sentences, paragraphs or short selections and are encouraged to report on the mental activity stimulated by that reading (Biggs, 1977, Buehler, 1951). Another approach used in several studies is to ask questions that elicit explanations about how the answers are derived (Biggs, 1977; Cafone, 1966; Fareed, 1971; Jacobson, 1974; Ngandu, 1977; Olshavsky, 1976-77; Robinson, 1976). However, those who interpret self-monitored data must take two problems into consideration. First, if comprehension strategies are well-practiced, they may happen so quickly that the reader is unable to capture and report on them. Second, even if the reader is aware of some strategies, he or she may not possess sufficient skill to adequately describe them. However, a teacher wishing to use introspective methods may overcome these problems using the following suggestions:

1) Provide challenging reading material to slow down the reading-thinking process so that the reader's chances of monitoring the process are increased.
2) Provide oral problem-solving activities that allow a reader to solve problems while encouraging him or her to think aloud.

After strategies are identified, the instructor and the reader can examine the patterns of strategy use to determine which lead the reader to successful productive reading. He or she can then be encouraged to practice those strategies found to produce satisfactory comprehension. Because each reader is unique in the special way he or she has integrated reading and reading-related experiences, instruction that builds on the reader's own specific strategies is likely to be more profitable, effective and efficient than instruction based on a list of generally derived strategies. Goodman (1976, pp. 101-102) warns that "strategy lessons must be used only with readers who need additional support with a particular strategy." Keeping the above-mentioned cautions in mind, the following guidelines can be used to develop a strategy-based instructional program for improving reading. Some suggestions are offered for identifying, analyzing and using the unique patterns an individual reader may already possess but fails to use effectively.

1) Select any two of the following suggestions to IDENTIFY STRATEGIES.

a. Introspection I - student describes orally his personal process for comprehending a short challenging reading selection (Biggs, 1977; Jacobson, 1973; Ngandu, 1976; Olshavsky, 1976-1977).

b. Introspection II - student keeps written record of problem words, phrases, sentences or paragraphs encountered during silent reading (Watson, 1979).

c. Introspection III - student cites clues that lead him to identify unknown words or phrases or to complete cloze exercises (Biggs, 1977).

d. Miscue analysis - as student reads orally, use one of the several simplified systems to code and analyze miscues (Bean, 1979; Christie, 1979; Tortelli, 1976).

2. LOOK FOR STRATEGY PATTERNS as indicators of productive strategies.

   a. Note recurring descriptions such as, "I read it over and over until it made sense, " "Now I know what that part means, the last sentence explains it."

   b. Note reasons given for cloze exercise responses that retain passage meaning: "I figured it had to be a word that tells 'how'," "I always see these words together."

   c. Note the tendency to correct oral reading for clarified meaning.

   d. Note and encourage the tendency to retell the events and/or ideas in the student's own words.

3. PLAN INSTRUCTION that includes practice of specifically identified productive strategies.

   a. The student who is distracted from the sense of a reading selection by unfamiliar names or labels can be led to skip over or substitute a word for unfamiliar terms while trying to make general sense of the reading (Watson, 1979).

   b. The student who sounds out unfamiliar words rather than looks for clues in a context-rich reading environment can practice completing highly predictable modified cloze passages to demonstrate that meaning can be gained through context analysis (Watson, 1979).

   c. The student who confuses words that look similar without realizing it can practice reading selections featuring one of the confused words until that word is easily recognized. Then a similar procedure is used to teach recognition of the other word (Goodman, 1976).

d. The student who reads very slowly for fear of failing to comprehend can be encouraged to practice reading easy and interesting material faster and telling the essence of what was read. The focus should be on identifying useful and interesting information available in the written material.

e. The student who reads word-by-word and becomes discouraged because the written message is not immediately clear, can be encouraged to read an entire sentence, paragraph or section for the general meaning.

Discussion and Conclusion

For the teacher determined to offer efficient and effective reading instruction to all students, including the 10 to 30 percent range of those readers who have traditionally achieved at less than expected levels, strategy-based instruction is suggested as one possible approach. The three step process described in this paper allows the teacher to use reading strengths as a vehicle for minimizing reading problems.

In step one, the teacher can observe a student's reading behavior under several conditions in order to determine the pattern of strategies used. For example, the reader can be encouraged to describe his or her thoughts while reading challenging material or while trying to grasp the authors meaning in a cloze or fill-in-the blanks passage. Step two of the process directs the teacher and the student first to examine the strategy patterns, then to sort out productive and non-productive behaviors. Productive strategy patterns, those that consistently lead to satisfactory comprehension, can be taken as guidelines for what to teach or practice. This second step in the process can encourage the student to acknowledge and put to use his or her own reading strengths and uniquenesses. The third step directs the student to read and look for opportunities to practice productive stragegies. The teacher's role at this point is to offer instruction that is strategy-specific so that helpful strategies can be deliberately and systematically practiced. The employment of strategy information to increase the use of productive strategies and to modify or eliminate non-productive strategies is the essence of strategy-based instruction. The process offers one more option to the teacher who strives for efficient and effective reading instruction for all students.

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MULTIFLEX GROUPING TO MAXIMIZE LEARNING IN READING:
A CHALLENGE TO THE PROFESSIONAL TEACHER

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Every teacher wants to be considered a professional, but unfortunately the public considers teachers to be only semiprofessional (Howsam, Corrigan, Denemark, and Nash, 1976). Why? A dozen standards are used to differentiate between professions and semiprofessions (Howsam, et.al. 1976, p. 6-9), and teachers, as yet, have not been able to fullfill all of them.

One standard that is partially **fulfilled** by many teachers, but **completely** fulfilled by only a few is this: "The professional collectively, and the professional individually, possesses a body of knowledge and a repertoire of behaviors and skills (professional culture) needed in the practice of the profession: such knowledge, behavior, and skills normally are not possessed by the nonprofessional" (Howsam, et al, 1976, p. 6). While it is true that most teachers have the knowledge required to earn bachelor's and master's degrees, this knowledge may not set them apart from the many, many parents who also have university degrees. Since teachers cannot be considered "special" enough to be professional on the basis of their general scholarly knowledge, there is only one area where they can have knowledge and skills that are different from the highly educated layman--that is knowledge of how to teach effectively.

Special competence in effective teaching is difficult to prove. Every parent teaches his/her children many things with no training whatever in how to teach. Most professors of the arts and sciences have never had any introduction to the psychology and methodology of teaching, and they insist that such preparation is more detrimental than beneficial. Of course, it is easy to observe that some parents are not very effective and that some professors, despite their eminence in a given field, are less **than** brilliant in their communication of that knowledge to their students.

In spite of this, university professors generally are classed as professionals! Perhaps this is true because they are admired as professional scholars whether or not they are good teachers.

If teaching competence is one of the marks of the difference between the layman teacher and the professional teacher, what are the specific competencies that should grow from advanced professional preparation? Here are a few:

1. Whereas the layman expects students to learn because they are told to, the professional teacher knows that the situation must be structured so that students feel the need to learn.
2. Whereas the layman expects that all children of a given age can learn the same things at the same rate, the professional teacher is aware that individual differences in aptitude and experience will cause a spread of several years in achievement and readiness for further learning in every subject and in every classroom.
3. Whereas the layman will make children who are "below average" or "above average" feel uncomfortable because of not fitting into the graded curriculum, the professional teacher will regularly diagnose the level of each child's achievement before beginning a new phase of study or skills development.
4. Whereas the layman will try to teach all of the children in a room at the same time, a professional teacher will differentiate assignments or will divide a class into smaller groups for different instructional purposes so that the work can be adjusted to their varying levels of readiness for the next stage of learning.
5. Whereas the layman will punish for failure to learn as expected in competition with others, the professional teacher will devise ways of rewarding individual progress and thereby reinforcing learning.
6. Whereas the layman is sure that his/her knowledge of the field of content is all that is needed to teach, the professional teacher knows that professional learning is never completed and will strive constantly to obtain or develop new techniques to increase instructional effectiveness.

These, of course, are only a few of the contrasts between the behaviors of a layman teacher and those of a professional teacher. But they suffice for this discussion, wherein the main concern is for differentiation of instruction in reading.

Administrative Differentiation

Because the American village schools were badly overcrowded and staffed by poorly prepared teachers during the first third of the nineteenth century, Horace Mann, a lawyer, decided to dedicate the remainder of his life to the imporvement of education. He toured Europe to seek answers and found what he liked in Prussia (French 1964, 14). There he observed the graded shcool, wherein children were placed in classes by age and, he thought, teachers had to know only enough to teach children of the particular class level to which they were assigned. Through his efforts the nongraded schools of America were quickly replaced with graded schools.

Teachers soon learned what Horace Mann had not--that children of the same age are not the same in their academic aptitudes and readiness to learn. And for more than a hundred years educators have been trying various ways of helping some proportion of the children break out of the lockstep of the graded school and its graded curriculum.

One of the early procedures was to provide enrichment experiences to challenge the more able students and keep them from being bored. Another early effort was a tracking system that provided for three levels of instruction for each grade. This led to administrative measures such as homogeneous sectioning and more recently to cross-class grouping. Also in recent years schools have tried team teaching, the dual progress plan, and various forms of nongrading or continuous progress plans.

Criteria for evaluating plans

In each case the plan that was initiated had one or more obvious merits. Unfortunately, however, the planners usually have failed to anticipate the disadvantages of their innovations. Frequently one improvement has been realized at the expense of adding several features that proved to be very debilitating.

Too often the planners have failed to remember that the individual student as a person is more important than any plan that is based on the ease and convenience for the administration or the faculty. Goodlad (1966) has said that a humanistic conception of education"... values each student simply because he is a human being." In this spirit the school or classroom organizational plan should provide for the rights and dignity of each individual. The curriculum, likewise, should be planned to develop the unique talents of each individual while helping him/her become personally self-fulfilled and socially effective.

A mechanical, regimented organization is not likely to contribute to the development of creative thinking and habits of fruitful independent study. Still, the plan must provide for a fairly systematic, developmental approach to learning so that the child is not confused and shortchanged in his education.

It is grimly amusing that school systems initiate programs to entice students who have dropped out to come back to school, because when they engage in common semi-professional practices,

> Schools create their own dropouts and other problems by trying to force some children into educational programs in which they feel unrewarded either because of lack of success or lack of stimulation. Since no one program, even a three-track system, will provide for all human variability, it is essential that school-organization changes lead to increased flexibility in curriculum.
>
> The teacher, too, must be considered as a person. The organizational pattern should enable him to be as successful as his knowledge and skill permit. It should encourage him to adapt his teaching in the ways that, for him, are most productive, and it should not place more demands upon him than can be met by a person of his capability. (Sartain 1968, p. 198)

To guide faculty members in selecting school and classroom organization patterns at a truly professional level, the following criteria are offered: (Sartain, 1966)

CRITERIA FOR EVALUATING ORGANIZATIONAL PATTERNS

A. Factors related to curriculum content and structure - The organizational patterns of schools and classrooms should contribute to the effectiveness of curricular planning and experiences. In view of the purposes of modern education, the recommended curriculum plan:

1. Places special value upon the uniqueness of each learner.
2. Provides both balance of content and opportunity for correlations among the various areas of study.
3. Structures the expected outcomes in continuous developmental growth sequences that include provision for spaced review.
4. Expands or contracts its offerings in depth and breadth to fit the varying capabilities and purposes of learners at different times.
5. Provides a variety of types of learning experiences to capitalize upon learners' different interests and modes of learning.

B. Factors related to the personal success of the learner - In order to enhance the child's opportunities to become an increasingly adequate person, the modern school:

1. Develops a warm, supportive teacher-pupil relationship.
2. Helps various pupils, in accordance with their different capabilities, to set somewhat different academic goals that provide challenge and stimulation.
3. Provides experiences which will help the learner see himself as a worthy, adequately capable person.
4. Provides experiences which encourage the child to interact with others in ways that strengthen his social understanding and habits as well as his academic competencies.

5. Facilitates the placement of responsibility for learning on the pupil, making him an intellectually active participant rather than a passive observer.
6. Develops habits of constructive self-direction through increasing opportunities for purposeful independent work.
7. Offers a consistent work load rather than one which fluctuates greatly from day to day and week to week.

ORGANIZATIONAL PATTERNS

C. Factors related to teacher effectiveness - A desirable pattern of school and classroom organization:

1. Makes the teacher fully aware of the extent and types of individual differences among children.
2. Provides for frequent evaluation of each pupil's general progress in terms of individual capacity rather than of class standards.
3. Enables teachers to do individual diagnostic appraisals and corrective teaching for most children who encounter temporary difficulties.
4. Makes fairly comprehensive pupil records readily available for adding notes about significant behaviors and for use in examining and analyzing problems and progress.

5. Provided enough flexibility of scheduling to permit teachers to readily change or extend daily time blocks and to alter curriculum plans in order to capitalize upon various types of learning opportunities.
6. Utilizes the special capabilities of teachers as fully as possible.
7. Makes efficient use of teacher time, providing the maximum amount of learning possible for the **amount** of instructional time and effort expended.
8. Is reasonably economical with respect to teacher-pupil ratio and utilization of school facilities.

Features of Organizational Plans

Most thorough discussions of different school and classroom organizational patterns have included four dimensions: (1) one-teacher vs. multiple-teacher instruction, (2) heterogeneous vs. homogeneous class sectioning, (3) differentiated vs. uniform instruction within the classroom, and (4) independent vs. directed study. While the delivery of differentiated instruction may be a major objective, any effort to provide differentiated instruction is inextricably related to the other three aspects of organization.

A very brief examination of some of the common organizational patterns follows.

Self-contained Classroom

The time-honored self-contained classroom in elementary and some middle schools has suffered much criticism in recent years. Its main fault is that it does not make use of special capabilities of teachers, because one teacher teaches all subjects regardless of his/her capability to do so. If, however, the teacher has no glaring weakness in any academic area, this organizational plan permits the teacher to become very well acquainted with each learner, to diagnose individual problems, to adjust instruction to different rates of progress, to develop a supportive teacher-pupil relationship, and to develop habits of constructive self-direction through increasing opportunities for purposeful independent work. It provides for the fulfillment of most of the criteria enumerated earlier.

If the teacher is not competent and does whole-class teaching most of the time, the self-contained classroom is difficult to defend. Obviously this is a good organizational procedure for a superior teacher, but pupils suffer a great loss with a weak teacher.

Modified Self-Contained Classroom

In the modified self-contained classroom the regular teacher teaches most of the academic subjects, but specialists come in to teach some special subjects, such as art, music, and physical education. This organization is less demanding on the teacher and provides some breaks in the school day for preparation. The teacher still can plan for art and music to be correlated with social studies, science, and literature units by making arrangements with the special subject teachers. Consequently, this plan also fulfills most of the criteria for good school and classroom organization, if the teacher does enough grouping within the class to provide for individual differences.

Departmentalization

Departmentalization, as practiced is some elementary schools and in most middle and secondary schools, makes maximum use of special capabilities of teachers. In doing so, it sacrifices most of the other values related to differentiated instruction, curriculum flexibility, and concern for the individual student as a human being. The main difficulty with deparmentalization is that every teacher must face too many students each day. When a teacher tries to work with twenty-five or thirty different youngsters every fifty minutes for five or six periods a day, it becomes impossible to do detailed diagnostic work, to know each child's social and emotional difficulties, to differentiate the curriculum requirements to fit different experience backgrounds, and to place value upon the uniqueness of each individual (Rouse,1946). Because the length of each period is controlled by the bell, there is no chance to extend periods of work when needed, and certainly the opportunities to correlate work in different fields are very limited.

Although some very secure, gifted children thrive in departmentalized programs, too many children who have been doing excellent work in modified self-contained elementary classrooms experience severe problems when they move into highly departmentalized middle or secondary schools. The research on departmentalization has not always been conclusive but over the years Rouse (1946), Jackson (1953), Spivak (1956), and King (1965) have all found that students in departmentalized programs do no better, and sometimes not as well as students in schools having different organizational patterns. King specifically found that fourth, fifth, and sixth grade students learned more in reading and arithmetic in self-contained classes than in departmentalized classes.

For advanced secondary students departmentalization may be the only way to provide the teacher expertise that is needed in some fields. For less advanced students, however, other procedures probably are less dehumanizing and more educative.

Block Plans

Several organizational plans, including the core curriculum organization, the dual progress plan, and others, provide for one teacher to work with one group of students for a major part of the school day, while sending them to various special, or departmental teachers for other parts of the day. Such plans attempt to combine the best features of the self-contained and the departmentalized organizations. The homeroom teacher, who may work with two classes, can accept responsibility for much diagnostic work, personal counselling, and communication with the families. The special subject teachers, who must work with a larger number of students, can take responsibility for discussing each child's growth with his homeroom teacher as they make decisions about curriculum and small group instruction that would be most beneficial to the youngster.

Different forms of block plans have evolved and been advocated through the years. During the forties a plan of this type, the core curriculum, was recommended by Faunce and Bossing and tested by others (Kelly and Beatty, 1953). It provided for a homeroom teacher to work for a double period with students by teaching them in more than one field, such as a "core" of English and social studies. The core curriculum was introduced successfully in a number of secondary schools, but lost ground after the launching of the Russian sputnik convinced Americans that they must return to tough, traditional course offerings.

Another class block procedure, the dual progress plan, was recommended as a means of overcoming the weaknesses of the self-contained plan in elementary schools (Stoddard,1961). During half of the day the children were placed with a homeroom teacher for certain basic subjects and they went to various special teachers during the other half of the day. The homeroom teacher worked with a second class during the other half-day. Heathers (1960) found that after two years of experimentation in Grades 3 through 8, pupil achievement in the dual progress system was about the same as in self-contained rooms except that the more able pupils had advanced more rapidly in science and mathematics. Teachers were divided in their opinions about the plan, some saying that it did not provide enough opportunity to get to know pupils well, to give adequate instruction to the low-ability groups, and to solve emotional and disciplinary problems.

Obviously, some of these elementary teachers appreciated the advantages of the self-contained classroom. Middle and junior high school teachers might find that the dual program plan provides homeroom teachers with far better opportunities to know the pupils than the fully departmentalized organization. If they were narrowly prepared in only one field, however, they would have difficulty in working with a class for a full half-day. Obviously the students would benefit from having teachers who are prepared in both major and minor fields, and the teachers, themselves, also would probably benefit from this more liberal type of educational preparation.

Another type of block plan is the modified team-teaching system that was demonstrated from 1964 through 1974 in the junior high division of the Falk Laboratory School of the University of Pittsburgh. Here three classes at different growth levels were assigned to three homeroom teachers who had competence in more than one subject field. Each teacher had his or her own homeroom class for two related subjects plus a short counselling-study period. One class was with its homeroom teacher for English and Social Studies, another class was with its homeroom teacher for mathematics and science, and the third for foreign language and developmental reading. The students circulated among these three teachers for their basic subjects and went to specialists for art, music, and physical education. Because the students were at different levels of development, it was possible for each teacher to work with them in a specific field, such as English, for two or three years even though they moved to a different homeroom.

This enabled the basic subject teachers to learn to know each student and his or her family very well. Academic acheivement usually was very high in this situation.

It is apparent that young children who are very dependent on the adults who work with them should have as few different teachers as possible. As they increase in maturity, self-directive ability, and ability to understand and cope with different adult personality styles, they can work successfully with more teachers. Therefore, it seems logical to have some type of self-contained organization at the primary levels, to move gradually to a block type of organization at middle levels, and to move to complete departmentalization for only the most mature students at the senior high school level. Even at the senior high level it would be wise to have some teachers organized into team blocks so that students who need to spend more time with a homeroom teacher and less time among many specialists will have an opportunity to do so.

Team Teaching. Team teaching is an organization wherein a group of teachers assumes responsibility jointly for the teaching of a number of classes. One teacher usually is the team leader who coordinates the planning to determine how they are going to divide their responsibilities for instructing the various groups of children. This planning is supposed to include the varying of group sizes so that some children who need much help can be taught in small groups while others are taught in large groups.

Team teaching can fulfill many of the criteria for good differentiated instruction if it is done in a modified manner such as that described in the previous section. Or it can fail almost entirely in fulfilling the criteria if teaching duties are assigned in the traditional departmentalized manner.

One of the major problems in making team teaching fully successful is that there seldom is any very large group of students ready to learn the same thing when others are taken aside for small group instruction. Some teachers indicate that these very large groups of forty to seventy create extreme discipline problems while learning very little.

A second problem often mentioned by supervisory personnel is that of personality conflicts and differences in values among the teachers who are supposed to work together. Good team teaching requires much group planning and it does not succeed if the teachers refuse to spend time together or do so with evident animosity.

A third factor that impedes good team teaching is having too many teachers and classes grouped into one team operation. The larger the number of teachers, the greater the problem of getting cooperation. More important, when the number of students is very large, the average individual becomes lost in the crowd and does not receive enough personal support and attention from a teacher whom he considers to be his own.

Homogeneous Sectioning Plans

To the layman it seems obvious that all of the problem of providing for individual differences could be removed sumply by assigning children to classes on the basis of ability, thereby creating classes A, B, C at any elementary or secondary grade level. Because this, likewise, seems logical to the semiprofessional educator who has had limited graduate study, it has been widely adopted in various school systems throughout the twentieth century.

In addition to the simple homogeneous sectioning plans, various forms of the Joplin cross-class sectioning plan have been adopted. This plan evolves from the recognition that any child may not be equally competent in several different fields of study, and therefore grouping him at the right level for reading may mean he has an inadequate placement for arithmetic or science. The cross-class plan tries to overcome this problem by requiring that all teachers in the shcool be able to teach all of the basic subjects. During the first hour in the morning children are placed in rooms strictly according to their levels of achievement in the subject to to be taught first. At the end of that hour they move to different rooms according their achievement levels in the next subject to be taught, etc. Obviously this could be done only at elementary and middle school levels where all students might study the same subjects. And it is also obvious that this type of organization has the same disadvantage in lack of specialization as do self-contained classrooms, plus all of the disadvantages of dehumanization and inflexibility found departmentalized classrooms.

Although the layman may feel that homogeneous sectioning is a neat panacea, the truly professional educator knows that decades of research have revealed it to be a dud. Long ago Hull (1927) and Burr (1931) both showed that after classes were divided into so-called homogeneous sections, the range of individual differences in each class was at least eighty per cent as great as if the classes were completely heterogeneous. Over the years research on homogeneous sectioning has continued, and few studies will illustrate the usual findings. Hartill (1936) studied progress of 1374 intermediate level pupils for half-year periods and found that with the same teachers the children made greater progress when sectioned heterogeneously than when sectioned homogeneously.

Edmiston and Benfer (1949) found that when curriculum patterns were not revised, fifth and sixth grade pupils in classes having a wide range of academic aptitude achieved as well as those in classes having a narrower range of aptitude. Borg (1966) did a carefully planned three-year study from which he concluded that, in general, superior pupils achieved slightly more in homogeneous than in heterogeneous classes, but in elementary reading they did not. In Borg's study the study skills of students in heterogeneous classes were better at all ability levels than those of students in homogeneous sections.

Goldberg, Passow, and Justman also published a major study in 1966. They gathered information on 2000 fifth and sixth grade pupils in different types of organizational situations and concluded that "...narrowing the ability range in the classroom on the basis of some measure of general academic aptitude will, by itself, in the absence of carefully planned adaptations of content and method, produce little positive change in the academic achievement of pupils at any ability level." They noted also that pupil achievement was not affected as much by the organizational pattern as by the teacher assigned to the class; some teachers were more successful than others regardless of the organizational plan.

In the study by Borg (1966), as well as in some work on the Joplin cross-class plan, it was noted that children sometimes made better than ordinary gains in the experimental groups during the first year, probably because of the novelty. In succeeding years, however, the experimental plan proved to be no more effective, and sometimes less effective, than the heterogeneous plans. This suggests that the reader of research should avoid accepting conclusions from short-range experiments.

Although the reader must be referred elsewhere to more extensive summaries of the research on homogeneous grouping (Cook, 1941, Eckstrom, 1961, Kelliher 1962, and Sartain, 1968), one additional study of major significance will be described here, because it shows clearly why homogeneous sections do not produce better results. Irving Balow (1962) considered how successful he could be in forming four homogeneous reading classes from ninety-four fifth grade pupils in a school in California. He first administered a battery of eight reading skills tests to all students and found that on each test there was a very wide range of achievement, with some children scoring as low as grade 2.0 on some tests and others scoring as high as 12.0 on some. He averaged the scores of each student on the eight tests and tentatively divided them into four classes on the basis of these score averages. The range of averages was from 2.0 to 3.6 in Class D, from 3.6 to 4.6 in Class C, from 4.6 to 5.6 in Class B, and from 5.7 to 9.0 in Class A.

If one looks only at these averages, it appears that each class is now much more homogeneous than when they were heterogeneously mixed. But this view overlooks the fact that an average does not show the strengths and weaknesses of each individual. Most pupils had scored low on some tests and high on others, but this was not shown by the averages. From the averages it appears that Class B, for example, is quite homogeneous. But the ranges of individual grade equivalent scores on each of the eight tests was very wide, as illustrated by the scores on these four tests for Class B:

Rate of Reading	1.8 to 12.7
Comprehension	2.5 to 11.1
Word Meaning	1.8 to 7.9
Alphabetization	3.1 to 12.4

Clearly the "homogeneous" sectioning did not produce homogeneous sections. The individuals in each class still would need almost as much differentiated teaching as if they had remained in common heterogeneous class. And probably this is the reason why some "homogeneous" classes do not achieve as well as heterogeneous classes: a teacher who knows he/she has a heterogeneous class often makes some effort to provide for individual differences, but the teacher who is erroneously told that a class is homogeneous makes the mistake of trying to teach every new skill at the same level to all students. The research consistently shows that differentiated instruction produces better results (Jones 1948, Walker 1961).

Individualized Reading

Individualized reading is a procedure wherein each child chooses a book he wants to read from among a large collection that is available and is given needed instruction in individual conferences with the teacher. The child spends most of his time in individual reading, some time in sharing his reading with others, and a small amount of time in the instructionsl conferences that may occur as often as twice a week or as infrequently as once every two or three weeks. During the conference the teacher tries to check on the child's comprehension of his reading, teaches specific skills that are needed, and motivates further reading.

A large number of studies on individual reading have been done, but many researchers have not included adequate controls for instructional time, teacher capabilities, and other factors. Results from studies that have been well designed have been summarized as follows:

> On the basis of available evidence, it can be concluded that some teachers, especially the more enthusiastic and experienced ones, can teach individualized reading successfully. Many children, especially the more capable ones, make adequate progress in induvidualized programs. The less capable students are less likely to progress satisfactorily in an individualized situation because they are not able to work independently for long periods.
>
> In some situations, the personal conference between the student and teacher seems to have great motivational value for the child; this is not invariably true, perhaps because of the lack of teacher-pupil rapport. Most children read more books in a program of individualized self-selection with conferences than in a basal program with supplementary books, unless teachers of the basal program make a special effort to promote extension reading. The additional amount of individualized reading practice does not always result in proportionately greater attainment of skills--perhaps because not every teacher can give enough help during the short conferences (Sartain 1968, p. 225).

While individualized reading may seem to be the ultimate in differentiated instruction, it does not produce better results than some other procedures.

Reasons Some Organizational Systems Are Not Effective

An examination of the criteria for evaluating organization patterns will show that most of the procedures fail to fulfill most of the criteria most of the time. Certain criteria are violated more flagrantly than others, however. These, therefore, are major reasons why several organizational systems are not successful:

1. Usually they fail to place high value on the uniqueness of the learner. Instead, they are conceived as ways of eliminating individuality, of making the children all alike so little differentiation will be required.
2. Frequently they fail to make the learner an active participant in the learning process so that he will be motivated and take responsibility for much of his learning. The learner is expected to learn because he is told to instead of because he has a real reason to learn.
3. In some situations (especially individualized reading rooms) the learner is given too much responsibility for his own learning before he is ready to cope with that responsibility. He is assigned to do work that is not checked or to read stories independently that are not often shared. In reviewing many

experimental studies on effective teaching, Rosenshine (1976) has found that the "direct instructional model" works best in teaching skills such as reading. He found that children learn most when the teacher is working with them directly and that independent work is of value only when very carefully supervised.

4. Most procedures do not make teachers fully aware of the extent and types of individual differences and then enable them to do individual diagnoses required for differentiated teaching.
5. Systems that attempt to avoid differentiated instruction by so-called homogeneous interclass sectioning fail because it is impossible to sort students into classes that are homogeneous in the various reading and writing skills that they need to learn.

Teachers Differentiate

Children, like adults, are individuals. Although they all belong to the human race (except on bad days!), their facial features are different, their hair colors are different, their skin colors are different, their dental features are different, their voices are different, their neurological systems are different, their emotional make-ups are different, and their backgrounds of experience are different. They differ in almost every detail; consequently it is utterly impossible for the school to provide an administrative design to divide them into classes in a manner that eliminates the differences in the details of their adacemic achievement: Provision for individual differences can be made only by competent professional teachers within the various classrooms.

The school organizational system does not have much effect on the provision for individual differences unless it restricts teacher freedom to do excellent work in ways that cross-class grouping or extensive departmentalization do. An excellent teacher can do much differentiation in most other types of situations. The best situation, however, is one that maximizes the value of human individuality and permits the teacher to be very creative and flexible in grouping and regrouping children for instruction. Perhaps the best for this is the nongraded multiple-age classroom.

Nongrading with Multi-age Sectioning and Modified Teaming

After nearly a hundred years of absence from American schools, the nongraded system was reintroduced in certain schools in Wisconsin in the thirties and has continued to gain ground at both the elementary and secondary levels ever since. The nongraded school has not been more successful than the graded school in every situation (Carbone,1961). This organization can be expected to fail if the curriculum is not carefully structured and the progress of students is not carefully monitored at every step. This may explain why some forms of the "open" school have been less productive than the more traditional type of organization (Wright,1975; Lukasevich and Gray,1978).

In 1965 a survey by the National Education Association revealed that one-third of 353 districts that responded were trying nongrading in some of their elementary schools (NEA Research Bulletin, 1965). The largest districts were doing the most experimentation with this organization.

Over the years a number carefully designed studies have shown favorable results for nongrading. Halliwell (1963) found that first grade children made significantly more progress in nongraded than graded classes, while second and third grade children also did better but not to a significant degree. Hillson, Jones, Moore, and VanDevender (1964) found that nongraded primary classes scored significantly higher than graded classes during the year and a half of their study. Findings favorable to nongrading were found also by Ingram (1960) and Skapski (1960).

An earlier excellent form of nongrading that included multi-age sectioning produced twenty-four achievement comparisons favorable to nongrading and only three favorable to regular graded classes (Rehwoldt and Hamilton, 1956).

The best organizational plan seems to be one that will make individual differences obvious, that will not interfere with teachers' efforts to provide differentiated instruction, and that will permit teachers to work cooperatively when such cooperation is advantageous to the youngsters concerned. Hilson and Bongo (1971) have described the development of such a system in *Continuous-Progress Education: A Practical Approach*. A system of this type was initiated and operated at Falk School, University of Pittsburgh for approximately ten years before 1974. Since that date the plan at Falk School has been revised somewhat, but still continues to include its full nongraded character.

The "original" Falk School Plan called for multi-age class sections--two or more years of chronological age-spread in each room--in order to emphasize individual differences. It also called for a continuous, nongraded curriculum, and modified teaming between two teachers at the elementary level.

Because of the two-year spread in ages, a teacher would receive only half of a new class each year and would continue to have the other half for a second year. This simplified the processes of getting to know each child well and of providing adequate diagnosis of social, emotional, and academic growth. Since instructional grouping within classes was based on academic standing, this plan made it possible for some children to be accelerated gradually to work more with older children and for a few to be decelerated gradually to work more with younger children

The modified teaming took the form of cooperation between two teachers having somewhat different academic strengths, but working at the same level and teaching all academic subjects. The two academic teachers could plan together, thereby benefitting from the special abilities of their partners. Although each divided his class into four to six groups for skills instruction, sometimes each class might have two or three children who did not fit comfortably into the skills groups in their own rooms. In that case they could go to the opposite room for a period of time to be determined by the teachers. Each homeroom teacher was responsible for the progress of all of his/her pupils even if a few went to another room for a while; therefore the decision to have a child spend time in a colleague's room was not made lightly.

The curriculum at Falk School was carefully sequenced with developmental check-lists provided in some fields to record the individual progress of each child. Although the work involved constant activity and frequent committee functions, this curriculum structure and the sense of responsibility of each teacher for his own twenty-four children resulted in superior academic progress.

Intraclass Grouping

The Falk School plan was successful in challenging every child primarily because of differentiated teaching through extensive grouping within the classroom. Not only did teachers group in four or more levels for skills, but they usually taught such subjects as science and social studies at two levels. This seems overwhelming to teachers who find that their teaching time runs out too soon even when they teach everybody at a single level.

Such teachers have not been led to recognize that children can be taught much faster if they really are all ready for the next step. That is, a teacher can teach a new reading skill to five children who all are fully ready for it in a fraction of the time that it takes to teach the same skill to a large number of youngsters when it is far beyond some of them. By dividing the class into more groups, the teacher is able to teach much more rapidly.

Multiflex Grouping for Reading

Over the years various authors have advocated fifteen or twenty different ways to group children for reading. More than half of these suggestions show that the writers never had the experience of teaching children!

A good grouping arrangement must fulfill as many of the criteria listed earlier as possible. No single type of grouping will do that, so a combination of three types is recommended: (1) power grouping, (2) skills refinement grouping, and (3) language activity grouping— multiflex grouping.

Power Grouping

Power groups are of the same type that are traditional in primary grades. In the power groups new skills are introduced and basic, or developmental, stories are read, discussed, and enjoyed. Work on each new skill is reinforced until the teacher is certain that the children are ready for the next skill; then the group moves on to another story.

Three power groups per classroom are not enough. This is easily proven in two ways: (1) by the failure rate and (2) by the evidence on the extent of individual differences.

In every classroom that is organized on a three-group basis a number of children are having great difficulty--there is no chance that they will become excellent readers because they are being forced unproductively through materials that are too difficult for them to master. Every child should be able to learn to read just as fluently as he speaks if he has adequate instruction and no psychological, neurological, or physiological impairment.

The simplest standard measure of individual academic aptitude used in most schools is the intelligence test. Although these tests are far from valid for every individual, they do provide scores that correlate quite strongly with academic achievement. The mental age scores for the Stanford-Binet Intelligence Test indicate that there is a four-year spread at the first grade level. That is, when children are six years old chronologically, they range in mental age from four to eight years. Primary teachers long have recognized this and most have provided three reading power groups. But too often they have not provided a fourth or a fifth group for those children who could progress much faster or for those who need to move much more slowly.

By the time the children are in the seventh grade, the spread of their mental ages has doubled what it was when they were in the first grade. Now some of them have the academic aptitudes of third and fourth graders, while others have the academic potential of tenth grade or higher. Obviously there is a need for teaching at more levels as the youngsters go through school instead of reducing the number of levels.

Teachers who have had no experience with differentiated instruction, however, are advised not to try to move too rapidly into multiple grouping. The person who has taught only one level, should try working at two levels and become successful in that endeavor before going to three levels, etc. Although excellent primary teachers can work with five or six reading power groups when they have a couple of hours a day for reading instruction, intermediate teachers usually must limit their number of groups to four because of the more limited time for reading. In that case the top group probably should be the largest, because the very gifted youngsters can be taught skills with a moderately advanced group, and then can be encouraged to do individual enrichment reading at more advanced levels.

Skills Refinement Group

Even the most capable students have difficulties at times with certain skills. This may be because of absences, emotional upsets, or any number of other reasons. This explains why early studies showed that trait differences within the class could not be reduced by more than twenty per-cent with homogeneous sectioning, and it also explains why the Balow study (1962) showed that there was a very wide range in achievement on reading skills tests even when the average scores for a class appeared to be quite homogeneous. Consequently a skills refinement group is needed for reteaching or reinforcing skills that a few children from all groups have not yet mastered.

For example, some children may be having difficulty in dividing new words into syllables in order to recognize their pronounciation. Therefore the teacher will provide fifteen or twenty minutes to bring those children together--perhaps one from the top group, two from the second group, one from the third, and three from the fourth. The children will meet with their regular power groups, but will come together for extra instruction during the skills refinement group time. The teacher will work with them for one, two, or three fifteen or twenty minute periods on successive days until they have mastered this problem. Then he will disband this refinement group and form another in relation to a different problem, perhaps difficulty in differentiating between the main ideas and the supporting ideas in a paragraph.

The skills refinement group work provides for constant "remedial" teaching in the classroom, and that certainly is the best kind of remedial work. Of course, there still will be a need for special remedial reading teachers for children whose problems are too severe to be managed in this way. One great contribution of skills refinement grouping is that it mixes children from different power levels, thereby removing some of the stigma and snobbery that comes from continuous placement in a power group. It helps the children recognize that the teacher is making an effort to fulfill their individual needs rather than merely rewarding them for native ability.

Language Activity Grouping

The high literacy rate of American citizens shows that the schools have been very successful in teaching children how to read, but the modest number of people who regularly read good books shows that schools have not always been successful in teaching young people to want to read. Perhaps the reason is that too much of the reading in school has been in lesson form--it has been unexciting assigned material that is followed by innumerable dull questions.

The authors of every published reading program always explain that their program is only an introduction to reading, that dozens of good books should be used to supplement the basal, or developmental materials. Unfortunately too many schools fail to provide the total program.

Consequently every elementary and middle school class to which reading is taught should be organized into language activity groups as well as reading power groups and a skills refinement group. The language activity group membership should cut across power group lines, so that, again, the youngsters are not made to feel they are part of a caste system.

The purpose of language activity groups is to involve the pupils in interesting, extensive reading, speaking, and writing related to a major language arts project. Examples of good projects include: a series of puppet shows, a school new magazine, a radio program based on a local ecology problem, an assembly program related to the history of selected holidays, a series of booklets on the family roots of class members, and others. The activity groups can be constituted as committees that have been selected to carry out a given share of the project responsibilities.

In the case of the puppet show project, each committee would plan to prepare a puppet show. First, they would be encouraged to read many, many stories independently and to share those stories through oral reading and discussion to determine which story would make the best show. They would use a creative dramatics approach to developing characters and dialouge, and then would write out general plans, stage directions, and invitations to the potential audience.

In the case of a radio porgram on a local ecology problem, they would visit the site and take pictures, list questions to be considered, divide into committees to pursue answers to the questions, read extensively in library materials and local newspapers, interview parents and other citizens, and then decide on a format for presenting the material they have uncovered. The radio program might take the form of a panel discussion, a question-answer session, or a "political" campaign. The preparation of each committee would then require further reading, organization, and writing of materials to be used in the script.

Regardless of what project is undertaken, it should be planned in a way that will guarantee that every committee member has a reason to do a great amount of individual reading beyond the selections in the basal program. There never should be a non-reader committee for such tasks as constructing a puppet theater, setting up the stage lights, or arranging the audience seating. Although the activity groups may meet only once or twice a week, the independent reading, the small-group planning, and the individual writing should become the major part of every pupil's "seatwork" in which they are involved while the teacher works with various power groups during the day and the week. This gives every youngster some profitable work to do instead of excessive workbook exercises that convince them that reading is a bore.

Scheduling for Multiflex Group Activities

To the teacher who has been working with every child separately in an individualized reading program, the scheduling of four or five power groups, one skills refinement group, and several activity goups during the week will seem simple. To the teacher who has done only whole-class teaching, it will seem impossible. But scheduling for work in multiflex groups is neither simple nor impossible. It does require that the teacher be a real professional, however--a person who is competent, dedicated, and diligent.

Suggested schedules for use at the primary level and for use at the intermediate or middle school levels are given here. They are based on the assumption that primary teachers spend about two and a half hours daily on reading, while intermediate and middle schools spend approximately an hour.

Weekly Reading Schedule - Primary

(2.5 hours daily)

AM Daily (1 hour 20 minutes)

a. 4-5 power groups (5-20 minutes each)
   (Cut out all nonessentials)

b. Skills refinement group (15-20 minutes)

c. Independent Work
   - Basal workbooks, skills lessons
   - Pupil team drill games on sight vocabulary and word-attack
   - Individualized extension reading
   - Unit or committee projects; creative writing

PM (1 hour 10 minutes)

Mon. - Power groups, projects individual reading

Tues. - Activity groups, individual diagnosis, individual conferences

Wed. - Power groups and individual projects

Thurs. - Power groups and individual projects

Fri. - Activity group projects, individual diagnosis, individual conferences

Weekly Reading Schedule - Intermediate/Middle School

(60 Minutes daily)

Monday

All groups : Review of plans for topical units and individual or committee projects, so pupils know what to do while their groups have independent work time.

Groups W & Y: Basal workbook skills
Individualized unit reading, writing
Team Drills on vocabulary
Committee assignments done by individuals and subgroups

Groups X & Z: Basal stories (10-30 minutes with teacher)

Tuesday

Groups W & Y: Basal stories (10-20 minutes with teacher)
Individual unit reading or writing

Groups X & Z: Basal workbook skills (5 minutes with teacher)
Team drills
Individualized unit reading
Committee work carried out by individuals and subgroups

Skills group: Needed work (15-20 minutes)

Wednesday

All groups : Same as Monday (except review of plans)

Skills group: Needed work (15-20 minutes)

Thursday

Same schedule as Tuesday

Friday

Committee planning and work on unit projects
Presentation and sharing of projects, bibliographies, etc.
Sharing of individual stories in small mixed groups
Individual diagnostic testing
Individualized reading and conferences

These schedules can be varied, of course, to fit different situations. Sometimes a teacher will find fifteen or twenty minutes here or there during the day to add for independent reading, diagnostic work, or project activities and thereby be able to shorten the larger block of time.

These schedules obviously are based on the belief that most power groups can be taught much more briefly than is the usual practice, by taking two steps in preparation: (1) making sure that the members of each power group are given developmental materials that all of them can read fluently after a brief introduction of any new skill, and (2) eliminating many of the nonessentials that have crept into reading instruction.

What are some of these nonessentials? One is sitting with a group while they are reading silently. This is a great waste of the teacher's time. If the children are properly grouped, they should need only occasional help with strange words, and then somebody else in the group should be able to give help to those who need it. The teacher should be free to move on to work with another group after doing brief readiness work with the first group and motivating them to read a story silently.

Another wasteful practice is to ask all of the detailed factual questions that are given in the teacher's manual about each story. It takes only three or four questions to check comprehension. Over-analysis of a story teaches children to hate reading.

The use of many team games and practice games led by different class leaders to practice quick recognition of vocabulary will save a great amount of readiness work time. Such practice games also teach the children not to be dependent on the teacher.

The Real Professional

The true professional in education always is looking for ways to serve humanity better instead of being tempted into cheating the children through too much old-fashioned whole-class instruction. At the same time he or she should not feel guilty because he has not always been the perfect teacher. The real professional knows that he/she began teaching at a modest level of competence and must learn and progress very gradually.

This means that nobody who has not already been doing some type of complex differentiated teaching should try to move all the way into multiflex grouping all at once. As suggested prviously, many teachers should add one power group at a time until they feel secure in what they are doing. Next they might add the language activity project work to enrich the reading and to provide worthwile work for students during the independent work periods. Finally, they should try the individual diagnostic procedures. The use of instruments such as the Spache Diagnostic Scales or procedures such as those described in this volume will be very helpful.
Selected group tests such as the Stanford Diagnostic also can be useful in the classroom if carefully interpreted.

The gradual implementation of superior differentiated instruction through use of power groups, a skills refinement group, and language activities groups will make it possible for most teachers to fulfill most of the criteria for good classroom organization. And the teacher who does so will reap the rich satisfaction of seeing maximum pupil progress and of knowing that he or she is performing in a truly professional manner that is far beyond what the layman could accomplish. Professional teachers who perform in this manner should be sure to invite parents and school board members in to observe the complexity and quality of the reading program. That surely will convince them that such teachers deserve professional salaries!

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DIAGNOSING AND INSTRUCTING THE UNIQUE LEARNER WHO HAS READING DIFFICULTIES IN HIGH SCHOOL AND COLLEGE

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For purposes here the unique learner is defined as an individual who is attending high school or college and is having difficulties reading well enough to function appropriately in his or her studies. This learner is familiar with print, the importance of left to right progression while trying to understand printed material and realizes that meaning should be obtained from that print. This learner's readiness for reading diagnosis and instruction is likely to be established. Diagnosis is necessary because it allows the learner and instructor the unique opportunity of uncovering the learner's reading strengths and needs. Knowledge of strengths and needs both motivates the learner and provides guidance and relevant instruction. Uncovering these strengths and needs is an ongoing process that is integrated with instruction. However, before exploring this process, attention will be focused on some approaches to diagnoses.

Several approaches to diagnosis are available to instructors. Among those selected as best for generating data to use as bases for instruction are: (1) gathering and cataloging personal data about the learner, (2) using informal and formal measures to assess reading skills, and (3) identifying a process for instructing the learner that utilizes data gathered about the learner. The learner and instructor should work together to identify primary areas of need for instruction. Once areas of need for the learner have been identified, the instructor begins a continuous diagnostic and instructional process.

Gathering Personal Data

Personal Data may be gathered by instructors in a number of ways that include the utilization of a number of tools. These tools may be formal or informal. Informal tools are recommended over formal ones because they can be designed to sensitively reveal the needs of learners. For example, instructors may devise criteria that will be used to solicit information about the learner's reading habits from the learner. These criteria can be used to evaluate responses solicited from the learner through written open-ended questions and conversations. The open-ended questions may be administered in one of two ways. First, the instructor asks the learner to respond to each question as it is read aloud and the instructor records the responses. In the second instance, the instructor gives the written questions to the learner and instructs the learner to read and write responses to each question. To solicit data from conversations with the learner, in instructor could direct the learner to talk about what he thinks is the approach he uses whenever he is able to obtain meaning from the printed page. In other words, the instructor should say to the learner, "How do you know when you have understood a line of print?"

Another way of gathering informal data is to use inventories that are already in print. The "Personal Data Form" designed by Scales (1978) may be used to collect written resopnses or it may be used for conversation purposes. There are nine items in this inventory. Responding to these items will provide important data on interests, experiences, reasons for wanting to read as well as inability to read, type of reading material, and time periods that are set aside for reading.

Once this information is obtained either in written or oral form, the instructor will then sift through it and identify that data that is primarily relevant to instructing the learner. This data will provide some knowledge or insight into the learner's reading behavior for both the learner and instructor.

Assessing Reading with Formal and Informal Measures

In order for the learner to be diagnosed appropriately, he and the instructor must have access to appropriate diagnostic measures. The instructor is charged with the responsibility of selecting these measures. Instructors may use Buros' Reading Tests and Reviews (1978) to read about the strengths and weaknesses of a number of formal measures that are in print. Additionally, they may closely analyze the measures by using the "Criteria for Measures Analysis" (Scales 1978) form. This form includes fifteen questions that can be asked about formal measures. The questions deal with such elements as: validity, reliability, abilities measured, strengths, weaknesses, item content and usability for the learner. However, if insturctors select a formal measure because of its content and find that the time for administering it is unrealistic for learners, they may expand the time period and interpret the measure accordingly (Scales 1978). Formal measures are to be selected only after instructors have studied the measures carefully, read the reviews from Reading Tests and Reviews (1978) and considered that information as it relates to the learner to be tested.

Since informal measures can more easily be adapted for use with the unique learner, instructors are urged to develop and use them whenever possible. Informal measures that have been used most recently are the Informal Reading Inventory (IRI) and the Reading Miscue Inventory (RMI). The IRI tends to be used more than the RMI partly because of ease and quickness of administration. While the IRI requires less time to administer and score, it does not provide as extensive a diagnostoc profile as the RMI. Generally, the purpose for administering the IRI is to gain some knowledge about the learner's word attack skills and to determine the independent instructional and frustrational reading level. RMI is different in that it "examines the way in which both language processes and thought processes function in the reading act". (Goodman and Burke 1970, p.5).

Another informal measure that has been given a great deal of attention in the past is the cloze procedure. Taylor (1953), Rankin (1979) and others support the traditional 5th, 8th, or 10th word deletion patterns for the cloze procedure. Using these patterns would require the learner to read the passage, fill in the deleted word immediately and give the passage to the instructor. Biggs' (1977) research encompasses the cloze procedure, elements from miscue analysis research instrospection and retrospection. Introspection and retrospection provided opportunities for her subjects to orally respond immediately after each written response on one passage and on another passage oral responses were made at the end of the passage respectively.

The Informal (Reading) Assessment Inventory (IRAI) (Scales 1978, 1980) is another informal measure that is gaining much attention. It is an integration of some of the ideas, processes and content that are found in the IRI and RMI. The procedure recommended here is that instructors follow the process that is similar to both the IRI and RMI. Material to be read can be taken from any subject area. The steps are: (1) select material from a variety of content areas, (2) devise criterion levels, (3) code as miscues deviations from the printed material, (4) evaluate miscues qualitatively and quantitatively then (5) estimate learner's ability to handle the reading process based on the data.

Process for Instructor and Learner

Organization for diagnosing and instructing the learner is a skill that the instructor can not overlook. The instructor must know how and where to begin with a learner. Additionally, he or she must know which materials to begin with as well as how to interpret data generated by those materials. Finally, instructors must know that interpretation of data which they use must translate into teaching/learning strategies for learners. Of equal importance is the fact that learners should accept some of the responsibility for their learning. They should commit themselves to following directions given by the instructor, asking questions when directions are unclear to them, keeping a record of their achievement and studying continually.

Following is a step-by-step guide for instructors and learners. This guide will ensure that instructors are organized and that learners will commit themselves to working to imporve their present reading status.

A. Guide for the Instructor

1. Formulate your rationale for working with the learner and write it down.
2. Gather and prepare needed materials:
    a. Personal Data Form and/or Interest Inventories
    b. Record keeping forms to be used during instruction (Scales & Biggs 1977).
    c. Select some commercial and non-commercial assessment measures.
    d. Analyze all commercial measure with the aid of the "Criteria for Measures Analysis form.
    e. Select reading materials.
    f. Obtain folders and other tools necessary for the assessment and instructional session.
3. Establish rapport with learners through conferences.
4. Suggest hypotheses; write out hypotheses. (These hypotheses may be an educated guess, a hunch or a speculation. An example: "This learner needs instruction in using contextual clues.")
5. Work through the Personal Data Form and/or interest inventories with learners.
6. Administer assessment measure.
7. Interpret data from assessment measures and present data, e.g.. write down the name of the measure, the score, then write the meaning of that score after it. Also, write down any learners behavior deemed important to the learning process.
8. From the collected data, list the learner's reading strengths and needs.

9. Rethink earlier stated hypotheses. It may be necessary to revise, rewrite, confirm and/or write new hypotheses. (These hypotheses may become teaching goals).
10. Based on your hypotheses and the learner's strengths and needs, devise an instructional lesson, strategy or prescription for the learner.
11. Guide the learner through the prescription.
12. Evaluate the effectiveness of the prescription as it relates to the learner's achievement.
13. Devise and write new prescription for the learner.
14. Henceforth, the procedure is ongoing, i.e., assess, prescribe, instruct, evaluate, and so on.

B. Guide for Learners

1. Discuss and/or write in responses to each item on the Personal Data Form and/or Interest Inventory.
2. Work through the selected measures according to the instructor's instructions.
3. Review data from items 1 and 2 with the instructor.
4. Identify primary reading needs with the instructor.
5. Work through a lesson or prescription with the instructor.
6. Record progress made with the lesson on your record keeping form.
7. Submit completed work to instructor for evaluation.
8. At the beginning of the next lesson, review notes recorded on record form, then proceed to work through the next lesson.

(This process then becomes continuous through satisfactory functioning) (Scales 1978).

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Part II

CAPITALIZING ON UNIQUENESS

Research dealing with language learning indicates that most children have much in common. The sequence of their developmental stages is well defined and varies little from child to child. The rate at which each child learns language rules, however, is highly variable. Cultural factors also influence language learning and contribute to each child's uniqueness. Parents and other educators, knowledgeable about developmental patterns as they relate to the acquisition of specific language skills, are prepared to facilitate children's growth toward communicative competence.

Literature has the potential for challenging all students regardless of their capabilities. In addition, books and poems can be used to enhance the learning of any language skill and can provide the link between language arts and other content areas. Whether students are labeled "learning disabled", "gifted", or "average", they can all benefit from hearing, reading, and responding to quality literature.

Young children are engaged in listening and speaking activities long before they learn to read and write. Some move with ease into using written language once they have acquired fluency with oral language. Others experience special problems when they attempt to put their own thoughts in writing. Skillful practioners have identified procedures for fostering growth in written expression. Teachers who know how to stimulate writing, how to respond during the composing process, and how to teach revision and editing skills will help even the most reluctant students find success.

Recently, many Vietnamese children have come to the United States where they are faced with the task of learning a new language while adjusting to a different culture. Any adult who interacts with such children must become sensitive to their cultural values and must be aware of the kinds of experiences thay may or may not have had. Knowing how a child's native language differs from English will help teachers design features. Care must be taken to set realistic goals and to provide an environment of understanding where rewarding learning experiences can take place.

Section II reviews relevant English language research and highlights the implications of this research for promoting communicative competence. A rationale and procedures are provided for including leterature in all aspects of the curriculum with all children. Many specific suggestions are offered for teaching writing to students experiencing difficulty in this area. Finally, the special needs of bilingual children are identified and appropriate techniques for teaching English as a second language to Vietnamese students are described.

ENGLISH LANGUAGE RESEARCH:
IMPLICATIONS FOR PERSONALIZED TEACHING OF COMMUNICATIVE COMPETENCE

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A five year old who had a strong need to communicate wrote this message: "I AM FRANK I WONT ANTS FOOR MI ANT FRM KUS MY ANTS R OL DED ANTS PLEYS" (Chomsky, 1976). If he didn't get any live ants, his ant farm wouldn't be very operational, to say the least. But beyond the content of that easily readable plea, what does its form tell us? Recent research on "early spellers" indicates this child has a sophisticated knowledge of the sound system of his language, knowledge which we feel will facilitate his learning to read and spell in what is known as traditional orthography. This is but one of the characteristics of what many of us who do research in the language arts and reading call communicative competence.

Communicative Competence Defined

Obviously a definition is in order -- what do we mean by communicative competence? Basically, it's each individual's largely unconscious knowledge of language structure and function. This knowledge includes the rule systems we have internalized for the meaning or semantic system of a language, the grammatical or syntactic structure, and the sound or phonological system of the language we speak, read and write. But the actual language used in communication with others is only part of communicative competence. We also have a set of internalized appropriateness rules; we know how and when to speak, with whom, and also when to be silent. For example, we know we don't discuss nuclear physics with psychiatrists or speak Pig Latin in the pulpit. Thus, communicative competence is essentially the set of language abilities of a speaker and listener, a reader and writer. Are you able to vary your speech and gestures to fit the expectations of others in a situation in order to transmit the meaning you want to? Are you able to comprehend what others mean, whether it's spoken or written? If you can, then you probably possess a high degree of communicative competence.

We also realize that communicative competence is learned through a long process of participation in a wide variety of communicative situations. Children are beginning participants in that process, and their lack of exposure to a wide variety of situations often provides some rather humorous results. Kornei Chukovsky, a highly venerated author of children's books in Russia, has provided some examples of children as not quite competent communicators.

> "A visitor asked about his baby sister: 'Does your little Irishka go to bed with the chickens?'
>
> 'No, she doesn't go to bed with the chickens. They Scratch! She sleeps in her cradle.'"
>
> "Four-year-old Olia, who came with her mother to visit a Moscow aunt, looked closely at this aunt and her husband as they were all having tea, and soon remarked with obvious disappointment: 'Mama! You said that Uncle always sits on Aunt Uniuta's neck but he has been sitting on a chair all the time we've been here.'"
>
> And from an American family:
>
> "'Betty, why didn't you provide a knife and fork for Mr. White?'
>
> 'Because I thought he didn't need them -- Daddy said he ate like a horse.'" (1968, p. 13)

I'm sure you all could provide many more examples of that sort. Some of my favorites are language misunderstandings of another kind. Remember the child who, at Christmas time, drew a picture of an airplane with a pilot and three figures sitting behind him. When asked by the teacher to explain the picture, he said that it was the flight to Egypt by Mary, Joseph and the Christchild. "But who is the person in the front?", the teacher asked. "Oh, that's Conscious Pilot." Or the child who recites the Pledge of Allegiance as "To the republic and the witch who stands on one nation, under God ...."

We can certainly understand what Dell Hymes means when he says:

> ...Linguistic theory treats of competence in terms of the child's acquisition of the ability to produce, understand, and discriminate any and all of the grammatical sentences of a language. A child from whom any and all of the grammatical sentences of a language might come with equal likelihood would be of course a social monster. Within the social matrix in which it acquires a system of grammar a child acquires also a system of its use, regarding persons, places, purposes, other modes of communications, etc. all the components of communicative events, together with attitudes and beliefs regarding them. There also develop patterns of the sequential use of language in conversation, address, standard routines, and the like. In such acquisition resides the child's sociolinguistic competence (or, more broadly, communicative competence), its ability to participate in its society as not only a speaking but also a communicating member.... (Hymes, 1974, 75)

Becoming a "communicating member" in our society is obviously a complex process, a process in which formal schooling plays a major role now. In fact, a case could be made that although schools do many different things, one of their accepted primary roles is the transmission of the ability to control a set of formal language registers, both spoken and written, an ability to use language in ways generally not learned elsewhere in our society. It doesn't mean that children couldn't learn these uses in other ways (and some do such as self-taught early readers), but they tend not to be utilized in our complex, technological society.

In greater detail, what aspects of communicative competence are generally learned in school? To quote Mehan, Cazden, Coles, Fisher and Maroules,

> In general terms, "communicative competence" (Hymes, 1972) in the classroom involves knowing that certain ways of talking and acting are appropriate on some occasions and not others, knowing with whom, when and where they can speak. This requires students to bring their action into synchrony with people who are already talking. To do so, they must employ classroom rules for taking turns, produce ordered utterances, and make coherent topical ties. (1976, 196-197)

Also, schooling includes both instruction designed to increase ability to communicate orally and in writing (speaking and writing) and to help students comprehend others' speech and writing (listening and reading) (DeStefano, 1978). The teaching of literacy is a large part of the school's effort to increase a student's ability to communicate in our society. Thus, communicative competance means competence in both oral and written modes of expression. Students are expected to speak, read and write in schools -- and to do it frequently.

The Challenge To Individualize

Our goal as educators and parents? To help each individual student grow in communicative competence, to become a literate member of a highly complex society. We want each student to learn to read and write with facility, ease, and perhaps pleasure. We want each student to learn to speak appropriately, while making clear and cogent points.

In turn, we do our best to teach those abilities which comprise communicative competence. And usually we are also firmly committed to personalizing -- individualizing our teaching -- as each day of contact with learners serves to further illustrate "different strokes for different folks."

Thus we are faced with the major question: How can we personalize our teaching of communicative competence even further? I have two main suggestions: First, know as much about the language relevant characteristics of each learner as you can. This includes the child's cultural background, ethnic identity, sex, and the level of language development, as well as the personality factors and intelligence level we usually think of as personal characteristics. We also need to know as much as we can about the student's existing level of communicative competence, his or her patterns of emerging communicative abilities. Is she reading before she comes to school? Is he writing notes by the time he's five? And so on.

Second suggestion: Know as much as possible about what is to be developed, and about how it is developed. What do you know about the mature processes of fluent speaking, of fluent spelling, of fluent writing? What do you know about how a learner arrives there? What do you know about the structure of English -- the language to be read, written and spelled? This knowledge of structure, process, and development comprises our teaching goals which, if we have them firmly in mind, allow us to assess an individual student's progress toward them by using various diagnostic techniques based on language structure and developmental patterns revealed by research.

Now, let's turn to English language research in those two areas crucial to personalized teaching: 1) learner characteristics, and 2) areas of communicative competence -- speaking, spelling and writing. I'll mention reading only very briefly, because it's already been ably discussed from a variety of standpoints.

Relevant Research: Language Learning

What can research tell us about a learner's characteristics relevant to expanding communicative competence? Fortunately studies conducted by linguists, psycholinguists and sociolinguists have revealed a great deal of pertinent information for personalized teaching of the language learner and user. Research shows us that we can safely assume that our students, by the time they enter school, have already learned a tremendous amount about the spoken language, and they control it rather well (De-Stefano, 1978). The following poems illustrate:*

When spring comes
I feel like a
Daisy just opening up into a new life.
I feel like running twenty miles
And taking off my heavy coat
And putting on a pair of sneakers.
I feel like I started a new life
And everything is better
Then it was before.
I get faster
In running and I can go swimming outdoors.
It feels like the smell of new flowers
And the animals
Coming up from their holes,
The birds coming back from their vacations.
I love spring.

Michael Patrick
Age 10

THE FIELD OF THE MICE AND THE MARIGOLD

The wind of the marigold,
The flies of the American Bird,
The shamrocks of the stones,
The Lord of the Fieldmice,
The marigold's lavender,
The marigold of the shammrocks,
The mice of the round-a-gold.
The tractors of the storm
How the wind blows
The wolves howl,
While the moon moves
Along in the sky.
The wind blows people's hats off
And blows people's dresses up.
The Lord Mayor of the Dreams,
The mari-of-the-golds,
The Lord Mayor of the Golds.

Etain Mary Clarke
Age 5

*From MIRACLES: POEMS BY CHILDREN OF THE ENGLISH SPEAKING WORLD by Richard Lewis, Copyright 1966. By permission of Simon and Shuster, Inc.

A gull's ghostly call.
Fish dive to deeper water
flashing down like leaves.

Stephen Hopkins
Age 10

THE FLYING SEA

The sea rolls by.
It's like bombs exploding
And when the roll fades away,
The flying sea sings.

Roger Mortimer
Age 7

I DON'T MIND

I Carolyn Jackson am a pure-blooded Negro in soul and mind.
My mother's from North Carolina and my father's from Florida.
I know when I go to that old wooden bed,
Somewhere on the other side of town, there is a child being put to bed in a soft cuddly nest.
But being a Negro isn't so bad (if you know what's going on)
Down South my cousin is being beat up--
And Look There...My aunt got put in jail for drinking from a white fountain.
But here I feel better because I have more freedom.
When I ride the train and sit next to a person of the opposite race
I feel like a crow in a robin's nest
And I feel dirty.
I'm not prejudiced or anything ...
If we go on a trip and they call me names,
I Don't Mind.

Carolyn Jackson
Age 11

THE MOUTH AND THE BODY

I passed along a quiet street
The mouth said a word
A man came and beat me
The mouth abused a lady
I was imprisoned.

Mouth, mouth, mouth
Always you act and I'm repaid
Once we shall meet
In a boxing ring
They you start speaking and let me react
And you'll feel what I feel.

Philip Mwanikih
Age 14

Slowly melting, slowly dying
My heart drops with the drips
The long finger of ice stretches out
And its tear roll off its tip.

Dianne Hill
Age 11

Even more basically, children -- by around age five or six -- control the major systems of their language: sound, structure and meaning. Whatever form aspects of the spoken language are not developed by that time seem to develop along the same lines as earlier ones, that is -- systematically. The process of development can be characterized as a progressive development and revision of sets of rules, based to some degree on input from the language environment surrounding the learner. The concept of revision is important, since it enables the learner to "move forward" in development as well as stressing the continuity of development.

It is proposed that the individual's role in this process is one of a hypothesizer. He or she unconsciously formulates a hypotheses about the underlying rule for some linguistic feature such as forming plurals, tests it through using it to comprehend and produce language, and then may modify the hypothesis if it doesn't fit the data. The hypothesizing can be seen in children's grammatical "mistakes," which will be discussed below.

Within the process of development, the sequence of acquiring various forms has been found to be remarkably stable among children, but the rate of development may vary. In other words, children apparently go through the same stages in developing a certain set of forms. The early stages seem to include formulation and use of the most generally applicable rules for a specific part of the language, with the later stages including the ability to use "exceptions" to the rule consistenly. Consequently we would expect and actually do find children using the regular past tense morpheme -ed before they consistently use the past tenses of the irregular verbs. (We may hear runned or eated.) We also find this for the regular plural morphene -s; children will say dogs and mouses and sheeps. Then gradually they begin to say ran, ate, mice and sheep. And how many times have you heard children say "That's mines" to pattern with yours, his, hers, ours and theirs. Mine is the single exception, so it's not imcomprehensible that a child hypothesizes mines to fit the rest of the pattern of English possessive pronouns. This application of a linguistic rule to items it doesn't fit in adult language is called overganeralization or overregularization and is probably done by all children.

Thus there is a predictable sequence of development of various forms, but the rate at which a child goes through a sequence, indeed, may vary from other children. As a teacher, you may have six-year-olds who are further developed in some areas than eleven-year-olds, or eight-year-olds who say holded, runned, foots, mines, that is, who are still overgeneralizing. This is not at all unusual; it's a part of individual differences we have learned to be sensitive to in the classroom. As such, I would say overgeneralization is nothing to be concerned about from an instructional standpoint; as a child's language system develops, these forms will drop out. So you can expect rate differences while finding the same sequence followed.

In English we have what is called the Minimal Distance Principle (MDP), which means that the noun closest to a complement verb (a verb in the infinitive form, i.e., with to + verb form) is the subject of that verb. For example, in the sentences:

Obadiah beseeched Crumbles to leave.
Obadiah permitted Crumbles to leave.
Obadiah urged Crumbles to leave.

the noun Crumbles is the subject of the complement verb to leave. In sentences of this type, the application of the MDP is required by the largest set of verbs that occur in the first verb position, for example, beseech, permit, tell, and want.

Carol Chomsky (1969) suggests that children learn the regular set first, applying the MDP as the most general rule in order to comprehend those sentences. You will remember this is a principle of language acquisition -- from general to specific. Then the children overgeneralize, as they do elsewhere in their system, to the exceptions to the MDP. Promise is an exception. "Obadiah promised Crumbles to leave" means that Obadiah, not Crumbles, was to do the leaving. In the earlier verb set, Crumbles was to leave. Chomsky found, in fact, that younger school-age children would often interpret the promise sentence as if it were a tell sentence, as in "Obadiah tells Crumbles to leave." They overgeneralized the MDP to those verbs that were exceptions to the principle. Later, as with morphology, they were able to "break" the most regular rule to correctly comprehend the exceptions. Dale suggests,

> Children obviously have preferences for a small number of general rules. Overgeneralizations are as common in syntax as in inflectional development. Just as American and Russian children overgeneralize past-tense, case, and other inflections, the children in Chomsky's experiment overgeneralized rules relating deep and surface structure. Exceptions to rules -- sentences in which the objects occur before the subjects, sentences that violate the minimal-distance principle -- are mastered only after a considerable interval (Dale, 1976, p. 136).

A film sequence of three second graders' responses to the following test sentences produced interesting results. In each case the child was given Snoopy and Linus dolls to manipulate. After each test sentence was read, the child was told: "Make him do it." The checks indicate appropriate responses.

"PROMISE-TELL" STRUCTURES IN CHILDREN'S LANGUAGE*

Test Sentences	Student 1	Student 2	Student 3
1. Linus tells Snoopy to hop up and down.	✓	✓	✓
2. Linus promises Snoopy to do a somersault.			✓
3. Snoopy promises Linus to hop up and down.		✓	✓
4. Linus tells Snoopy to lie down.	✓	✓	✓
5. Linus promises Snoopy to stand on the block.			✓
6. Snoopy promises Linus to lie down.			✓
7. Linus tells Snoopy to do a somersault.	✓	✓	✓
8. Snoopy promises Linus to stand on the block			✓

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Notice how these three children, all the same age, displayed different developmental levels. The first second grader overgeneralized, applying the MDP to promise. The middle child did not overgeneralize in one instance of promise but did in the others. The third child broke the general rule in all instances when it was logical. All were in the same grade, but with different developmental rates. Frankly, we have little idea as to the why of these differences, but they certainly exist and will be found in any classroom.

Socio/Cultural Influences on Language

What other differences in learning language characteristics are relevant to our concern, as educators and parents, for expanding communicative competence? One of the most important is the socio-cultural differences displayed in some of the language forms found in students' speech and in the way in which they use language. Because of its educational implications, one uf the most important socio-cultural groups in this country is inner-city Black, with the attendant language variety often referred to as Black or Non-standard English. What are some of the characteristics of this variety? First, it is not particularly geographically constrained. Children have been found in Oakland, California (DeStefano, 1970) and in Philadelphia (DeStefano, 1972) using many of the same forms in much the same way. Other linguists have found the same vernacular spoken in Los Angeles, Detroit, Chicago, New York City, and Washington, D.C. The reasons for the overwhelming similarities in language is not well understood -- but the similarities do exist.

Who are the persons who speak this social variety of English that is evidenced in both black and white speakers. They tend to be racially isolated. They also tend to be residentially isolated; that is, they live in areas with fairly definite boundaries and may experience great difficulty getting out of these areas (see St. Clair Drake on Chicago's "Gilded Ghetto" in DeStefano, 1973). They also tend to be socially isolated in that they interact much more closely with one another than they do with people outside their neighborhood. Non-standard English speakers also have a distinct culture, different from middle-class, "main-stream" culture. The children may have a different conception of behavior in meeting a teacher's eyes. In fact, it's considered impolite to look an adult in the eye as it is a challenge to their authority -- in their culture. Another difference, according to Abrahams (1975, 70-71).

> Silence is ... highly valued in children (especially in the presence of Mamma)....Within the home the child is expected to observe and, in learning tasks, to emulate the maternal figure .... In this ambience words between adults and children are extremely restricted; few words are used .... The value placed on silence in the home (on the part of children) is one facet of an elaborate ideal of deference, which includes learning proper modes of address, how and when to act in the presence of adults, and how and where to look (mutely) when being addressed by an older person.

This is all culturally constrained behavior. If you are teaching the children described here, you may be dealing with another culture with a set of values and specifications for behavior.

Also part of this culture is the system of forms found in the spoken language. Very briefly, some differences you may hear are:

_th_ _Sounds_

1. Word initial

*SE	that	they
Non-SE	dat	dey

2. Within a word:

SE	nothing	author(voiceless)
Non-SE	nuf'n	ahfuh
SE	brother	rather(voiced)
Non-SE	bruvah	ravah

3. Word final:

SE	Ruth	tooth
Non-SE	Ruf	toof

Absence of Forms of _to_ _be_:

When SE contrasts, Non-SE may delete

SE	I am -- I'm going
Non-SE	I am -- I going

Indirect Questions

SE	I asked Sheila if she could come.
Non-SE	I axed Sheila could she come.

*SE -- Standard English
Non-SE -- Non-standard English

Combine the different forms with different uses, and we can experience a cultural mismatch with children from the inner-city. When we aren't aware of the mismatch, cultural clash can be the result. In such a clash situation, both parties can be quite upset about the other's behavior and not know why. For example, the lower-class black (or white) student who doesn't look the teacher in the eye may be labeled "sneaky." The teacher who demands being looked in the eye confuses the student who knows you only look at an adult when you're defying his or her authority. Respect is shown by downcast eyes. So the teacher unconsciously encourages insubordination in the student but reacts extremely negatively when that student is self-assertive in ways other than looking directly at the teacher.

Social language-use systems can also contribute to cultural clash when they mismatch. Labov (1968) gives a clear example of this when he contrasts the Black ghetto culture's modes of expressing politeness and disagreement with those of middle-class culture. In the middle class a child does not say to an adult, "You're stupid" or "You're wrong," especially in certain tones of voice. The social rule is such that an adult may say these things to a child, but not vice versa. A child from the ghetto culture hasn't learned the same social rule set. Disagreement with adults is often expressed nonverbally in that culture or, sometimes, by certain kinds of verbal forms which, on the surface, may seem highly disrespectful but are encouraged so the child will develop the ability to assert him or herself verbally, an important part of the culture. (See Abranams, 1975.) So when the child begins to be verbal in school -- which is usually encouraged -- he or she doesn't know all the rules for school disagreement forms and consequently makes mistakes. These mistakes can have severe consequences. There are students in Harlem schools who are labeled "incorrigible" and "troublemakers" on their permanent records because they do disagree in middle-class modes of politeness. And this happens in many more places than just Harlem.

Obviously cultural clash can have some very real negative effects in classrooms where there are several cultures. It is helpful if we understand that there are different systems of social language use that are culturally constrained. We can become aware of their existence and learn something aobut the specific language patterns used. We can use this insight to help various groups of students maximize their communicative competence and to prevent turning them into even more silent students who sit quietly simply to get through each school day with a minimum of embarrassment. Some cultures we need to be aware of in this context are: Black, Appalachian, Chinese, the various American Indian and Spanish-based cultures (i.e., Chicano, Mexican-American, and Puerto Rican). The list could be much longer; we can extend it by extending our awareness of and sensitivity to different systems of the social uses of language.

We need not let the language differences of these children interfere with their learning to read and write. Much current research indicates, for example, that children who speak varieties of English different from the teacher's can just as easily learn to read the written language, if the classroom atmosphere and their culture are not hostile to literacy. For example, a study by May (1976) indicated that children who spoke Black English experienced no interference in identifying words spelled in traditional orthography. In a very real sense, all students, no matter what variety of English they speak, are a certain "distance" from the forms they must learn to read, particularly in more acvanced reading in the upper grades. For example, passives are not used frequently in any spoken variety of American English. Nor are poetic inversions, such as "came the dawn," found to any great extent in speech. Long appositive phrases such as "my uncle, the one who now lives in Paris when he isn't touring the world in his yacht ..." are also common only in writing. These are a few of the syntactic differences between speech and writing that must be dealt with by students reading the written language. Constrastive comparisons between forms in the spoken and written modes would be helpful to all students learning to read. In fact, Carol Chomsky (1972) has proposed that children's exposure to the written forms of the language by their own reading, as well as by adults reading to them, positively influences their language development between the ages of five and ten. Evidently students do take advantage of the variety and complexity of the written language as they read it or as it is read to them. No matter what level I taught at, I read aloud to my students almost daily, bringing to their ears usually more difficult material than they could comfortable read at first (in high school, it was Shakespeare).

Language Registers

What can research tell us about important areas of communicative competence and about the process of acquiring them? On crucial area of expanding the communicative competence of students is in learning the language of the classroom, both in understanding it when listening and in speaking it. It is useful, I think, to categorize classroom language, as used by the teacher and learned by the student, into registers. A register is a socially constrained variety of language. If a social situation changes, the register a speaker uses may also change in its sounds, grammar, and vocabulary, as well as being accompanied by gestural changes. Vocabulary changes are probably the most obvious distinctions between registers, at least in American English. For example, "bug" may be used in informal, peer speech as in "Ugh, look at that bug." But in more formal situations, "insect" is called for. An entomologist studies insects, while bugs bite us on warm summer evenings. Or contrast "Shut up!" with "Please be quiet." Think about these various switches:

Teacher to an unruly child: "If you don't be quiet, you'll have to stay in from recess," or "Be quiet, Tommy."

Teacher to a friend in teacher's lounge: "That kid's yackity-yacking is driving me nuts."

Teacher to principal: "Tommy is disruptive in class and a behavior problem at times."

Teacher to Tommy's parents: "Tommy has a tendency to be noisy in class."

Or take the example Bolinger (1975, p. 377) gives. He suggests looking up the synonyms of "crazy" in Roget's Thesaurus and noting the different registers some belong to. Compare "maddened," "insensate," and "demented" to "daft," "loco," "teched," "not right in the upper story" and "off one's nut."

A register is generally conceived to be situationally bound; switch the person's social situation and the person may switch registers if he or she has the competence to do so and if the social situation calls for it. Halliday, McIntosh and Strevens note that registers "are not marginal or special varieties of languages. Between them they cover the total range of our language activity" (1964, 89).

There are several registers that are important in school. One such register I have called the Language Instruction Register, or the LIR as I will refer to it

(DeStefano, 1978). This register can be characterized as being one of the registers of English language learning which includes literacy learning, so important in American schools. Phonology is an important part of the register. In normal, informal speech, some people say ghos and des with an elongated final s. However, in spelling lessons we invariably say ghosts. "All the ghosts come out on Halloween." And desks as in "We are all sitting in rows of desks." But later, "O.K., now pull your dess around in a circle." Think a moment about the vocabulary used by teachers in the teaching of reading: sound, letter, word, sentence, beginning sound, blend, and so forth. These are all terms children have learned in their literacy lessons; they are part of the LIR. But do children have the same definitions that adults do?

Downing (1970, 1977), Downing and Oliver (1974), and Reid (1966) have studied first-graders' developing concepts of important instructional terminology, such as word, sound, vowel and sentence. Even at the end of the year, they found some children unable to identify accurately a word from a sound or from a phrase. Sinclair and Coulthard (1975, p. 65) present the following example of lack of convergence with accepted definition for literacy concepts.

> Student: Mat's got two vowels in it.
> Teacher: What are they?
> Student: a & t.

Yet teachers and parents often assume children have the same meaning for these terms that they do, and they instruct their students accordingly. Douglas Barnes (1969) reports some of the same mismatch in students' understanding of what he calls the Math Instruction Register. In fact, Papandropoulou and Sinclair's (1974) study of developing language awareness indicates that children at age six or so, the typical of beginning first graders in this country, may often define "a long word" by producing two clauses and "a short word" by producing a clause or a sentence; e.g., "He goes away and then he gets into the car" was proposed as a "long word." Another favorite is "train" as a long word bacause "a train is big." Other developing definitions also show the same lack of match with the adult's definition of word.

This lack of fit can have important instructional consequences. For example, the teacher may have formed the prior belief that a student's definition of terms in in the Language Instruction Register "fits" the teacher's. Under this condition, despite subsequent evidence that their definitions do not match, the teacher may not take steps to try to establish common meanings with the student, whose progress in learning important terminology may thus be impeded.

Such mismatches are thought to be particularly pronounced with children from oral cultures such as those of the inner-city Black, Appalachian, and native American. Downing, Ollila and Oliver (1975) note that American Indian children tested significantly less well than Canadian children reared in a literary culture, in forming concepts of literacy including some of those discussed above. These authors stated that their findings "supported the hypothesis that the Indian children's concepts of the functions of writing are less well developed because they come from a home background with no cultural tratition of literacy" (p. 316). There seems to be a widespread assumption on the part of teachers that young children comprehend "accurately" an important part of the meaning or semantic component of the Language Instruction Register (LIR), the register associated with literacy instruction. But it is important for educators to make sure that their students understand how these terms are meant. Some will know, perhaps, but others will not. To personalize one's teaching, a teacher can check with each child to discern his or her definitions. If they do not match, strategies need to be devised to help that student learn, for example, what a letter is, a sound, and so on.

These school-based registers are probably some of the most important ones that children develop, because they contain registers which are written. In other words, children develop a socially curcial set of registers as they learn to read, to write, and to spell. Their semantic system increases repidly as they acquire a reading and writing vocabulary which increasingly diverges from their speaking and listening vocabulary. Their syntactic system expands as they learn to use constructions such as left-branched sentences, which far more often appear in written registers than in spoken. And their phonological system is affected by certain "careful" pronunciations of, say, final consonant clusters such as -sts as in ghosts and -sks as in desks, in an evident attempt to create closer phoneme-grapneme, sound-letter correspondences for learning purposes.

Acquiring Spelling Skills

Another crucial aspect of communicative competence in our literary society is the ability to spell. It's a part of learning to write but is quite different from organizing one's thoughts to get them down on paper in a coherent manner. And, in my opinion, it is one of the areas of communicative competence that lends itself most readily to personalized teaching, to a diagnostic approach. So what are some ways we can help our students become "good spellers"? How can English language research help us in this task?

As teachers of beginning spellers expecially, you can first diagnose the initial spelling attempts of a student from the basis of phoneme-grapheme corresponsences. Is the student making the connection between sounds and letters? If not, there could be a real problem developing. In my experience with older students, those who couldn't spell were the ones who couldn't make many phoneme-grapheme correspondences. For them, spelling was a laborious process of visual memorization, often with virtually no transfer of the tratitional spelling of the word to contexts other than the one in which it was learned. These students seemed unable to exploit phoneme-grapheme correspondences in reading, as well as in spelling. Somehow they did not seem to have grasped the connection between the oral and written language. The latter evidently was not related to their speech, but was taught as a strange system with a life of its own. If this can be diagnosed early, when the child is learning to read and write initially, then the correspondence patterns can be stressed. Certainly the spelling process should progress further than this, but the student who spells action as akshun is far ahead of the student who spells it tach (as I have seen some students do).

What do some initial spellings look like? Fortunately we have some research conducted primarily by Charles Read (1975) and Carol Chomsky (1976) which throws light on the systems used by "early spellers," those children who begin to spell spontaneously, with no instruction.

One of Read's major conclusions about children who have devised their own spelling systems is that they categorize speech sounds in phonetically justifiable ways, and that different children arrive at many of the same spellings, e.g., there is a system in the invented spellings. The basic process is one of "matching" letters and sounds in order to write. And we find common language strategies being employed -- deletion, substitution, and in some cases, insertion.

Let's take a closer look at some of these strategies the self-taught spellers use. First, can you read the three messages? (Refer to the "Invented Spelling" examples.) They aren't that difficult, are they? Now, how about the word list below the messages? These were selected to illustrate some of the phonological principles Read found operating among the self-taught spellers. First, note the first two lines. They should read:

BOT - boat   FEL - feel   TIGR - tiger
KAM - came   LIK - like   UNITD - united

Here the children invariably match the sound of the "long" vowel letter name - o, e, i, a, u - to the vowel sound in a word - /bot/, /kem/, /layk/, etc. This illustrates a principle used by early spellers; usually where they can, they will match the sound of a letter name to the same or similar sound as found in a word. These are common substitutions.

"Invented" Spelling

DER MOMOY I HOP YOO OR FEELIG BEDR
I AM MKIG THS PRESIM FOOR YOO BI
DIANE (5 year old)

DADE ID DONT LIK THIS ROOM WIN U GO
    UPSTERS
KEN I STA DAOON STERS
I AM CMIN DAOON STERS YES
I WILL KOOM DAOON STERS (5 year old)

WUNS A LITL BUNE HOPT A CROS MI LON
    AND THAT BUNE HOPT
    RUYT IN MI HAWS AND I GAV THT
    BUNE SUM MILK (5.2 years old)

BOT FEL TIGR
KAM LIK UNITD

FRN DIKTR GRL LITL
KLR AFTR BRD

DG MN

WOT PLAT BOPY NUBRS AGRE

CHRAN JRAGIN CHRIBLS

THAQ R U

(Chromsky, 1976)

Going on to the next two lines we find:

FRN - fern DIKTR - doctor GRL - girl LITL - little

KLR - color AFTR - after BRD - bird

Here, L and R function syllabically with no vowel letter appearing at all. Note that phonemically the missing oral vowel is the /ə/ or /ʌ/, sometimes in a relatively unstressed syllable. But the actual "reasons" for such a non-appearance of the vowel letter that we have in traditional orthography are complex, according to Read, and based on phonetic rather than phonological similarities (1975, pp. 60-61). Suffice it to say, this is a consistent pattern in children's early writing -- a common pattern of deletion.

Noting now the DG and MN, this has been explained on the basis that in the earliest writing, often if a spoken vowel doesn't match the sound of a letter name (A, E, I, O and U) it will be omitted (deletion again); so, DG instead of dog and MN instead of man. However, these appear later as the child's system becomes more precise and developed.

WOT is won't, PLAT is plant, BOPY is bumpy, NUBRS is numbers, and AGRE is angry. What deletion principle is operating here? Consistently, early spellers delete a nasal sound preceding a consonant or following certain vowels, namely the /ʌ/ and /æ/ which are often slightly nazalized in English if followed by a nasal. The phonetic explanation offered by Read (1975) is complex but, again, governed by English phonological and phonetic rules.

CHRAN - train JRAGIN - dragon CHRIBLS - troubles

CHR and JR are sometimes used in place of tr and dr. This is not the most common pattern as English consonant sounds tend much more to be represented consistently by letters in trational orthography than are vowels. However, the phonetic motivation for these substitutions of *ch* for *t* and *j* for *d* followed by an /r/ is clear: say the initial sounds. Phonetically the sounds are affricates which are a combination of a stop and a fricative, the sound being produced with more friction than other sounds. So those spellings are actually well motivated phonetically and, as Read (1975, 53) puts it, are not "perceptual shortcomings."

Finally we find: THAQ - thank you, R - are, U - you. Here, obviously, letter names are used to represent the word or larger segment - /k/ and /u/ in *thank you*. Again, we find substitutions for traditional orthography on the children's part, but again motivated by certain kinds of rules.

Perhaps one of the most striking aspects of early spelling is that, although the rules the children use are not necessarily adult phonetic or phonological rules, they are patterns which are explainable within the English sound system. What children attend to is not what adults attend to, so their rule system is different. But it's a rule system directly based on their emerging control over the sound system of English.

What implications does this research have for personalized teaching? Quite a few, it turns out. Let me quote Carol Chomsky, who puts it very clearly.

> By age 5 or earlier many children's ability to analyze words phonetically will already be well developed. They can recognize words that begin with the same sound and words that rhyme. Those who cannot will need practice in this sort of analysis before they can be expected to spell. It is surprising how much phonetic information is available to introspection at this age and how readily this knowledge can be raised to the level of awareness through word play, questioning, and talk about sounds. Easiest of all for child is to recognize words that begin with the same sound, such as *toy*, *table*, and *touch*. Once he can do this, he can become aware of what sound a word begins with. Awareness of rhyme, or knowing that *toy* and *boy* end alike is also an early ability. Usually, sensitivity to rhyme precedes the ability to identify words that end alike only in their final sound, such as *dog* and *hug*. The syllable is easier to deal with than individual sounds at this stage. The most advanced ability is segmenting the entire word into its component sounds (i.e., being able to figure out, on reflection, what sequence of separate sounds make up the word). The child who can do this can figure out that in table, for example, a [tə] sound comes first, then an [ey] sound, then [bə], and finally [əl].
>
> Practice in attending to sounds with guidance from a teacher who is aware of these separate abilities will be enormously helpful to the child. But in order to get started with spelling, only the simplest phonetic awareness is needed. The child who knows the *man* begins with a [mə] sound, for example, is ready. If he knows letter names or

> sounds, he is prepared to find the letters he needs to spell words. He does not even need to know all the consonants and vowels in order to spell his first word. Just the letters needed for the particular word are enough. (Chomsky, 1976, pp. 502-503)

Charles Read (1975) also offers suggestions for teachers of children who are spelling. He suggests that in responding to their apparent spelling errors, and we know they aren't errors but are more like miscues in the Goodmans' sense, we should indicate we understand "the reasonable nature" of their spellings. He suggests:

> Our basic suggestion is, first, that teachers attempt to distinguish different kinds of spelling errors: those that are based on phonetic relationships from those that are based on visual confusions (such as the left-right inversion of _b_ and _d_), from those that are based on overgeneralization of otherwise valid sound-spelling correspondences (such as spelling SED for _said_). In the first and last cases, the child is actually using a principle that has some validity and will be useful later on. The principle in the first case is that related sounds may be spelled alike: this notion must be qualified and deepened quite considerably in order to be applicable to Endlish spelling. In the meantime, a teacher should try to recognize when there is a phonetic relationship underlying an apparent error, and give a child credit for a correct judgment and a resonable attempt at constructing a spelling. (Read, 1975, pp. 144-145)

He says we also need to refrain from unhelpful instructions such as when a child spells _truck_ as _chruk_, do not say: "Truck. Don't you hear the first sound - t?" The point is that the child does hear the first sounds, but at the phonetic and not the phonimic level at which we as adults tend to operate. However, we can help children learn that the English spelling system does reflect some genuine phonological relationships, especially among the consonants, but at a more abstract level than the child may initially fundtion on.

Still there is a question: Do these invented spellings persist and possibly prevent or interfere with a child's learning to spell with traditional orthography? The answer to this is an emphatic _no_. Read found that the early spellers gave up their own spelling systems and developed the standard one when required to do so. In fact, he notes that some children managed the two spelling systems side by side, using their own outside the classroom and the standard in school. So their own spellings did not become habitual, evidently because they are products of a rule system which is modified by each child. It's a stage, just as a child's using _mans_ instead of _men_ and _runned_ instead of _ran_ is a stage in the development of their syntactic system and definitely does not become habitual.

It is not necessary to worry about interference from a child's own system. In fact, I think teachers are lucky when they have children who come to school already reading and writing. They have already begun the "re-invention process" that Piaget (1972, p. 27) thinks is crucial to a childs cognitive development. And they have already begun the process of becoming literate, a quality of prime importance in our culture and society.

For the student who doesn't seem to be making sound-symbol correspondences in spelling, you can devise strategies stressing the patterns in American English. For some students, minimal pairs could be a useful strategy. For example, you can have the student contrast:

pit
pat
pot
put
pet

This is helpful because the "short" vowels are more regularly spelled than are the complex vowel nuclei or "long" vowels. Some reading patterns can also be applied to spelling if they are "reversed" for the production process; a student reading rate is usually taught that in single syllable words, the letter e indicates that orally the vowel should be "long." Ofter the pattern is taught by contrast:

fat - fate
rat - rate
mop - mope

In order to help with spelling, it can be pointed out that the so-called long vowel in that medial position often indicates the grapheme needed is the vowel letter + e separated by a consonant. The grapheme for many so-called long vowels in single syllable words is actually an a-e or o-e or whatever. The e letter is part of it.

An even simpler way phoneme-grapheme relationships can be a help to spellers. We know that students will often put in extra letters and make reversals of letters, as well as making substitutions of the nashun-nation type. Many insertions can be handled by having the student pronounce the word as it is written to hear if it "sounds right." For example, let's say being is spelled bienging, or minute as minutute or minutre. Asking the student to compare the pronunciation of the word he or she has written to the word in traditional orthography can help the student learn to compare phonemes and graphemes. Are there too many, as in the case of bienging?

(That spelling looks as though predominantly visual clues were somehow short-circuited.)

Reversals of letters are also common. Possibly they are caused partly by an emphasis on visual cues. For example, if you find derset for desert, stearm for stream, or unerdneath for underneath on a student's paper, you can have him read the words aloud to see of he can catch the reversal in spelling. The student will become a more powerful speller by such checking and by becoming more attuned to sound-letter relationships through it.

After you've diagnosed that a student is able to exploit and use phoneme-grapheme relationships, you can work with some spelling strategies based on the regular patterns of correspondence found in the American English spelling system. Materials stressing the patterns can be devised for use by your students. But a few words of caution: students learn in different ways. To stress only phoneme-grapheme correspondences can still produce spellers who are inadequate. How many times have you heard adults say, "I don't spell very well. I was taught to sound everything out."

Unfortunately, time prevents me from presenting information and suggestions about spelling more complicated words, but there is help in that area provided by further research. However, a diagnostic approach by educators toward an individual student's spelling "errors" is certainly possible and is a very fruitful way in which to proceed. It can represent some of the best of personalized teaching motivated by sound research on the Endlish language, both spoken and written.

Developing Syntactic Complexity

Finally, I'd like to briefly discuss an area of research in writing which has implications for the personalized teaching of communicative competence. Students have a tendency, in their written work, to produce short, simple sentences, one right after the other. This is quite a recognizable pattern, isn't it?

> One day when I was going to Arnold's house. I saw a ufo. I went up the stairs to get Arnold. I told him that a ufo was out side and it had green and red and white lights. He said that it wasn't one out there. Then I showed it to him. He said it was. So Arnold and I got some dinamite and we blew up the ship. One of them got away and told the others. when they herd the bad news they left and never came back.

More mature writing, at the sentence structure or syntactic level, could look something like this:

> One day when I was going to Arnold's house, I saw a UFO. I went up the stairs to get Arnold to tell him a UFO with green, red and white lights was outside. He said there wasn't one out there, so then I showed it to him. He said it was! Arnold and I got some dynamite and blew up the ship. However, one of them got away and told the others. When they heard the bad news, they left, never to come back.

Granted, there are still some desired characteristics missing in this composition, but at the sentence structure level, it is more compact, the sentences are longer, and the structure is more complex. Frank O'Hare (1973) has done some seminal research on helping students achieve this great maturity in their written sentence structure through a technique called sentence-combining.

> The heron tensed its wings for the plunge.
> The heron was princely.
> The heron was perched high on a ledge.
> The ledge was rock.
> The ledge's hight enabled the bird to survey the waters.
> The waters were swirling.
> The waters were blue-white.
> The waters were below on three sides.
> The plunge would be spectacular.
> The plunge was soon to be triggered by a school of fish.
> The school of fish was fast approaching.

A possible combination is:

> The princely heron, perched high on a rocky ledge whose height enabled the bird to survey the swirling blue-white waters that were below on three sides, tensed its wings for the spectacular plunge soon to be triggered by a fast approaching school of fish (p. 91).

When is it profitable to begin sentence combining activities? We haven't much research in this area, but the Miller and New (1968) study used fourth graders who seemed to benefit by oral exercises. O'Hare suggests grade four as a reasonable starting point for written sentence combining. To begin with, the sentence sets would be simpler than these eleven sentences about the heron embedded into each other. But they could concentrate on embedding to counteract the conjoining tendencies found in so much writing. O'Hare also suggests second grade as a possibility for beginning oral combining exercises. I've found that some second-graders experience great difficulty in embedding sentences. They tend to conjoin much more frequently or even say things like, "Say the two (sentences) together real fast. Don't stop but say them together" as a response to the instructions "Make these sentences into one sentence." But these are children who had received no practice in sentence combining; it's not that they can't learn to do it and benefit from it. Other second-graders were able to combine quickly and gave me such mature combinations as "The black cat likes hot milk" for "The cat is black" and "The cat likes hot milk." As a teacher you can diagnose each student's ability to combine in that way and then create exercises to give each practice in embedding. I'd also say sentence-combining can be used in college with benefit for some students.

There are many sources of sentence sets to combine, the two most important begin with you and the student. For example, from experience stories dictated by the student or from compositions written by a student, you could extract sentences that could be combined by various embedding techniques. You, yourself, can create sentence pairs or triplets or whatever that the students would then combine.

1. The pitcher looked up intently.
   The pitcher glanced at first base.
   Then he threw a hanging curve which the batter knocked out of the stadium.
2. Helen raised her pistol.
   She took careful aim.
   She squeezed off five rapid shots to the center of the target.

   (Helen raised her pistol, took careful aim, and squeezed off five rapid shots to the center of the target.)
3. Fearless Fred dashed into the room.
   He dived at the dastardly robber.
   He missed.
   He went sailing out of the five-story window. (O'Hare, 1971)

Since it seems clear that no terminology is necessary to accomplish this, you can rely on your own intuitive knowledge of the language to help the students make more mature combinations. Two further suggestions: O'Hare counsels integration of the exercises into other language activities such as free writing, choral reading and the like. This way it takes its "natural" place, because it's for something instead of being an empty exercise to fill up time. Put in perspective, such activities will also have more transfer to actual writing. This is something we cannot take for granted -- transfer to the activity intended. Placing such practice in a writing context will insure more transfer and make the exercises meaningful.

Finally, don't overdo the practice. O'Hare's students did not spend much more than an hour a week throughout the year at such exercises. If it's given much more emphasis, especially as an isolated activity, it could begin to be seen as "the same old thing" by students. If "the same old thing" is taught in the "same old way," it could be as ineffective as many other exercises used for writing.

There is so much more I could say and would like to say about English language research implications for the personalized teaching of communicative competence. The possibilities for individualized instruction are growing rapidly as we learn more about the language-relevent characteristics of individual learners, about their development of communicative competence, and about the English language itself, both spoken and written.

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WRITING INSTRUCTION FOR RELUCTANT WRITERS

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My discussion focuses on students in grades 7 to 13 and on four specific aspects of writing: the writing classroom, assignments, responding to student writing, and evaluating writing. I hope to demonstrate that these four aspects of teaching writing are woven together in the fabric of a pedagogy appropriate for both reluctant and enthusiastic writers. Along the way, I point out some of the more pedagogically useful things we know about writing from a growing body of research and theory. I also hope to convince you to adopt a skeptical stance towards methods for the teaching of writing that advocate anything but a writing-workshop/conference approach.

Before beginning my discussion of these four aspects of writing that I want to bear on the problems of reluctant writers, I think a brief overview of the situation we face as writing teachers and the factors contributing to the development of "reluctant writers" would be helpful. And since these are inextricably intertwined, like threads of the same cloth, I will begin with the most noticeable--public opinion--and work my way to the more subtler dimensions--reasons for reluctant writers.

Currrent Instructional Practices

Writing is a hot issue now. The media treats it with front page and prime time respect, and the publishing world abounds with textbooks that purport to teach writing. In reality, the press, general sentiment, and textbooks display incredible ignorance about writing, teaching writing, and evaluating writing (Graves, 1977). Many of the popular articles, for instance, advocate a return to teaching grammar as a basic component of teaching writing without taking into consideration one of the most fundamental facts about the relationship of grammar instruction to writing. When we teach students grammar through workbooks, exercises, and metalinguistic tasks, we teach them to do what linguists do--we teach them to be analyzers and describers of sentences. We know (Elley, Barham, Lamb, & Wyllie, 1976; Petrosky, 1977) these analytic and descriptive skills do not transfer to the actual making of writing. In other words, being an analyzer of writing has little to do with being a writer. On the other hand, we know--through the practices of good writers (Stallard, 1974; Wall, 1979) and teachers of writing (Murray, 1968)--that addressing grammatical problems in the context of students' actual writing in workshops and conferences is very useful. To write, as Donald Graves (1977) ways, you need to write. Exercises in workbooks give students the wrong ideas about writing and, equally distressing, they steal time from writing.

Outside of our insistence on the teaching of grammar under the guise of teaching writing, I know of only two other mythic practices that gather as much attention in both the classroom and in public opinion: topic sentences and paragraphs. We have long thought teaching writing meant we first teach words, then phrases, then sentences, then papagraphs, and that the key to good papagraphs is something called a topic sentence. This fragmented approach is clearly contrary to the purpose for writing at any age level--to say something to someone. To say something to someone, we write whole pieces of discourse; we write notes, letters, essays, and stories. Our impulse to communicate from the early years on is bounded by our need to say something within the context of the situation or task at hand, and this means we need to write whole pieces of discourse. Before laying the issue of the sentence aside, I would also like to point out that such things as topic sentences and paragraphs are hare to define (Meade & Ellis, 1970; Braddock, 1974). According to Richard Braddock's study, no matter what definitions of topic sentences we subscribe to, we cannot get sophisticated raters to find them in naturally occuring prose. Likewise, according to the Meade and Ellis study, the best we can say about papagraphs is that they are whole chunks of prose marked off by resting places. If we know these things, and the evidence is convincing, then why do we spend so much time asking students to labor over the construction of topic sentences and formulaic papagraphs? Real writers do not write this way. They do not write this way because their attention must be focused on the meaning they are making and, more often than not, the meaning they are discovering within themselves (Murray, 1969). My final point is this: when we ask students to do structural things like paying attention to topic sentences and paragraphs while they are writing, we are making it impossible for them to write. We are, in effect, asking them to distract themselves. If we must insist in making students adhere to predetermined structures, then we are the wiser--and the more helpful--if we teach them to leave these tasks for the last stages of writing: revising and editing.

I have painted a picture of some of the more popular practices taking the place of writing in the schools and now I want to focus my attention on the outcomes of these practices. If you were a student who had been taught from elementary school on to grade 13 that writing means making correct sentences out of incorrect ones, or making correct sentences with no connection to anything you know or care about, or trying to say something to someone only to find out they care more about your errors than what you say, you would be a reluctant, frustrated writer. To further complicate matters, I must point out, according to Grave's Ford Foundation Report on Writing (1977), teachers at all levels of schooling do not know how to teach writing because they were never taught how to teach it. Graves found, among other things, only a handful of teacher preparation colleges in the United States required would-be secondary school English teachers to take a course in the teaching of writing and, sadder yet, only two colleges required would-be elementary school teachers to take a course in the teaching of writing. You should also know he found, from the same national survey, teachers who teach writing do not write. The question I want to ask, then, is: would you study violin from a teacher who does not play the violin? But, my question is not accurate. Perhaps I can better phrase it by saying: how would you feel about playing the violin if you were being taught by a teacher who did not play, who was never taught how to teach violin, and who, furthermore, wanted you to learn violin by analyzing and describing the music made by violins without giving you the chance to play the violin? I think, at the very least, you would be reluctant and quite frustrated, confused, and angry.

Reluctant writers are, then, people who could write if they were shown how, but cannot because they were not taught how, and because they are frustrated, angry, and lazy from thinking something else--making perfect papers in 45 minutes, or analyzing sentences, or saying nothing to no one--is writing. They are reluctant because they are afraid to fail, because they think only poor writers make errors, because they have the wrong ideas about what good writers do, because they have wrong expectations about their own writing, and because they have not had the chance to do much writing.

I began my discussion by promising to outline a writing program for reluctant writers. What I really want to do now is outline a program for writers because I know of only one way to teach writing. In my program reluctant writers receive extra attention once in awhile, but that is all that marks them off from the other writers.

Teaching Writing

Writers of all ages and predispositions need some information about writing. To this end, I suggest a simple first assigment--a paper titled "How I Write." Everyone in the class writes the paper about how they write--what they do; how they do things, in what order; what is easy, difficult, rewarding; how they begin; how they end--with the knowledge that all the papers will be duplicated and distributed to everyone in the class. This immediately sets the atmosphere for the writing class: this is a writing-workshop where people talk to each other about their writing following both the model and the directions set up by the teacher (Murray, 1968; Young, Becker, & Pike, 1970). The standard fare of the wordshop includes: assignments done on time, duplication (or projection) of selected assignments, discussion of individual papers to make suggestions for revisions, revising, one-to-one student conferences (once the students have picked up the procedure--usually 6 to 8 weeks), and teacher-student conferences (Cooper, 1977). Once the atmosphere is set by the initial "How I Write" assignment, the writing workshop is the sole method of teaching writing with occasional discussions of such things as points of grammar and punctuation (always using student papers for examples). And while the "How I Write" paper sets the tone for the meetings to come, it also provides the opportunity for students to talk about what they learned from reading each others' papers. The discussion leads to talk about common things like stages or steps in the writing process. Students focus on the thinking and researching (Prewriting) writers do before they write; they talk about a trance-like state of spontaneity when they get going and the ideas begin to flow (Writing); and they talk about fixing up what they have written (Editing). To their information, I add other things. For instance, I do not expect students to say much about revision as an integral part of writing because most of them have never revised a paper other than fixing errors of syntax or spelling (Wall, 1979). I tell them they will be expected to revise all their papers at least once and that revising means "reseeing" what you have written with the help of other people. And I teach everyone to talk about content, focus, clarity, coherence, organization, the use of specifics and illustrations to support generalizations, and personal "voices" or "stances" as the kinds of things writers need help with and the kinds of things they need to pay attention to when they talk with another writer about a paper (Murray, 1968; Moffett, 1968). And I do more. I tell students not to worry about anything except what they are writing. I insist all error fixing and structuring wait until they have something on the paper to work with. And, I do not talk at all about topic sentences, but I do talk about connections between chunks of writing and thoughts and ideas. In short, I tell them what I know about the writing process and important distinctions between generating and editing. They see that the process is not magical but is, on the other difficult and time consuming for everyone, including good writers. And I assure them if I do not read or comment on their papers, someone else in the workshop will. Furthermore, I tell them I will talk to them about their errors beginning with problems of the whole piece and then slowly work my way over the course of the year to sentence level errors. It will take that long, I assure them, for us to get around to working on some things. Because I do not want to overwhelm them, I take things slowly, one at a time, in their own good time.

Assignments

There seem to be three basic kinds of writing assignments and, of course each kind comes in varying degrees of itself. The fine line that divides Restricted Topics from Restricted Discourse Type Only, and Restricted Discourse Type Only from Self-Chosen is actually a hazy field of gray. Nevertheless, it is useful to think of writing assignments on a continuum of restrictions. At one end of the continuum we can place Restricted Topic assignments as the most restricting. Assigments that fall into this category carefully tell writers exactly what to do. These kinds of assignments are usually composed as explicit directives and are very useful for testing. This assignment on being trapped (developed by David Bartholomae) asks writers first to imagine a time they felt trapped, and then, finally, to draw some conclusions about being trapped.

TRAPPED

> I want you to write about a time in your life when you felt trapped. Pick a time, a situation, an experience in your life when you felt you were trapped. Describe the situation and be sure to explain why you felt trapped. After you have described

> the situation and explained why you felt trapped, go on to say what it means to be trapped. Go on, in other words, to comment on being trapped in general.

Sequencing the tasks within the assignment along the lines of direct chronological problem-solving routines (Young, Becker, & Pike, 1970) helps the writer see the tasks and the order in which they are to be completed.

Since there are many ways of being explicit and directive, there are many ways to write these kinds of Restricted Topic assignments. Graduate students in the Composition Program at the University of Pittsburgh produce some of the best of these assignments in sequences much like the sequenced assignments in The Plural I by William Coles Jr. Whatever the assignments look like, they all restrict writers' choices.

Assignments restricted according to discourse type only limit writers in very general ways. Instead of being explicit and directive like the restricted topic assignments, they are general and broad, limiting writers only by the kind of writing. We place these assignments in the middle of our restriction continuum. Generally, these kinds of assignments are based on a theoretical model of discourse types. There are three or four helpful models of discourse types, but the one I have seen used most often and with the greatest success is based on the work of James Kinneavy (1971). In his scheme, discourse falls into four major categories: expressive, explanatory, persuasive, and literary. Each category is defined by what writers do. Expressive, for instance, includes all writing that is focused primarily on the self, while explanatory is all writing that focuses on explaining a subject. Persuasive focuses on persuading someone about something, and literary catches fiction and poetry. The scheme is often portrayed as a triangle with expressive, explanatory, and persuasive being the points of the triangle. Literary isn't on the triangle and since the scheme works by identifying writing as primarily expressive, explanatory, or persuasive, it could absorb literature.

Assignments based on the discourse model would, then, ask students to write in one of the discourse types. An expressive assignment would, for instance, ask students to write about themselves in a personal, informal way. An explanatory task would ask students to write to persuade us to accept or believe in something. Restricted Discourse Type assignments allow writers more choices and, like the Restricted Topic assignments, lend themselves to sequenced assignments built around developmental or thematic notions.

Self-Chosen assignments give students complete freedom of choices. Generally, writers write about what they want to write about. A number of experienced writing teachers argue that self-chosen assignments are the only way to go because writing should come from the writer facing the question of what to write about. We pick things to write about because, the argument goes, we want to or need to write about them. Whatever the case, my experience with self-chosen assignments at all grade levels leads me to believe that they are the best way of getting students involved with a piece of writing for a long period of time. I am always impressed by the amount of work and revision writers will do when they are committed to what they are writing. Self-chosen assignments usually give writers the opportunity to delve deeply into writing and themselves.

All three types of writing assignments--Topic Restricted, Restricted Discourse Type, and Self-Chosen--offer writers experiences they need. The question facing teachers is not so much what to do, but when and how to do it. I think there is evidence (Murray, 1968; Moffett, 1968) to say beginning writers (no matter what grade level) need to begin writing in ways closest to their natural inclinations. James Moffett suggests a gradual movement from writing that is chiefly recording and reporting to writing that generalizes and theorizes on the basis of records and reports. Lloyd-Jones suggests a gradual movement from expressive writing (writing focused on the self) to explanatory writing (writing focused on explaining a subject) to persuasive writing (writing focused of persuading an audience). Both of these experts think these stages or movements reflect developmental tendencies, and contemporary psychology (Piaget, 1958) bears them out. We move into the world expressively, recording and reporting what we see, and then as we mature, we begin explaining the people and things we encounter, and finally, we try to take our experiences and generalize from them. Some of us go on to take groups of generalizations and turn them into theories of such things as writing. My point is this: there are good reasons for sequencing the kinds of writing tasks we give students. A number of these sequences have been turned writing curricula. James Moffett's A Student-Centered Language Arts Curriculum, k-13 is the best of a small bunch of curricula that use developmental sequencing. We desperately need to sequence instruction in writing programs and Moffett offers us one of the soundest ways to do it.

There is no formula for sequencing assignments by kind in classes. Students need different things at different times in their lives. If I had a class of students that couldn't write persuasive writing, I would first find out what they could write and then decide how I would take them from where they are to persuasive writing. I tend to favor the more general assignments that are restricted by discourse types, but I have taught writing classes that needed the discipline of restricted topics. Self-chosen assignments. And while I can not offer a formula for sequencing or using different kinds of assignments I can tell you that simply knowing the kinds of tasks you set up for writers helps. It has taken me a good deal of time, trial-and error, and practice to know what kinds of assignments to use and when.

I suggest organizing the writing sequence around some major theme connected in some way to the lives of the writers. At the University of Pittsburgh, students in our Basic Reading and Writing Classes (freshmen testing into the low 10% of their class) read and write around the theme of "Identity and Change." They read books like Maya Angelou's I Know Why the Caged Bird Sings and J.D. Salinger's The Catcher in the Rye while writing essays about significant events in their lives and times they felt trapped. I can imagine other themes like "The Outside World," or "Alienation" for students, but I put particular stock in "Identity and Change" because it touches all of us, but more importantly, it touches us profoundly when we are adolescents.

Responding to Student Writing

As I mentioned previously, the writing-workshop fosters responses to pieces of writing and students learn specific heuristics (Moffett, 1968; Murray, 1968; Young, Becker, & Pike, 1970)--ways for talking about a piece of writing. They learn how to talk about focus in a piece of writing; connectedness between ideas, passages, and sentences. They also learn to see if writing is over- or under-written; in need of expansion, clarification, or restructuring. It takes our Basic Reading and Writing freshmen 6 to 8 weeks of 3 two hour meetings a week to learn to do these things. It takes them much longer to learn to argue in conventional persuasive ways and to use specifics to support generalizations.

We teach students to talk to other students about their writing because revision, the process of reseeing, almost always requires feedback from readers. It is difficult for writers, including good writers, to see their writing in the light of another's eyes unless they have feedback in the form of discussion and extensive comments. On the other hand, we are careful to avoid rewriting someone's paper for them. We give suggestions, and we give as many suggestions as we can come up with. Often we go around the class asking each person what they can say to help the writer with a specific problem And, it is important to be sure everyone points to specific places in the piece of writing when talking about it. This way no one is allowed to make unsubstantiated comments. If someone thinks an essay is weak, they must point to what in the essay is weak, say why it is weak, and go on to say what the writer might do to change. By giving suggestions for change in this way, we help the writer see choices (Young, Becker, & Pike, 1970; Odell, 1976). It is up to the writer, then, to decide what choices to act on.

When responding to writing, we suggest taking one thing at a time beginning with issues affecting the whole piece of writing and working into sentence level problems over the course of the year. Writers are easily overwhelmed, and we want to be careful not to misdirect their attention when they are writing. We want to be careful to keep the editing in its place after the writing and revision. To this end, we ask students in the Basic Reading and Writing classes to write their drafts non-stop for one hour. We ask them to write themselves out before tinkering. We tell them to keep the editing for a later time in the process. Sometimes this is difficult for them to do because they have been taught for so long to disrupt themselves by focusing their attention of special topic sentences, or trying to know what they are going to say before they write it. We tell them they will find out what they have to say after they have started writing it, and after they have written it, they can revise and edit it.

What holds true for the workshop also holds true for the conferences, be they peer or student-teacher. Conferences are worked out the night before they take place. Plan on allowing each student about 2 minutes. To do this, I suggest a plan I once Walter Loban describe. Put your desk in the middle of the front of the room and put a student desk facing you on each side of it. On the blackboard, in line with each student desk, write the names of the people who are to conference with you. The names should be in the order that the students are to conference. With the two lists, one in line with each desk, there can be no mistake of who is to go where when. I make two piles of papers corresponding to the lists of names. Attached to each paper, I have a 3 by 5 inch card with a few notes to myself about the paper. I use this as the basis for my discussion. I have found if students tap each other on the shoulder when they are finished, the conferences proceed smoothly and I hardly ever need more than 3 minutes. As writers grow accustomed to the procedure, I try to shift the burden of what to talk about to them. When this begins, the conference times go up ot 3 or 4 minutes and then back to 2 or 3 minutes once the students are comfortable with the process.

Peer conferences can go on for 10 or 15 minutes. I suggest peer conferences over small group sessions because the responsibility is much greater in a one-on-one situation. I also suggest carefully matching students in the beginning. Once they can work together, then they can rotate as frequently as necessary. We ask students to put two desks together facing each other and spend the first minutes reading each other's papers. After they read the paper, they talk to each other about the papers. For these conferences to be successful, the writers need some training in how to talk about a piece of writing. After two or three weeks of writing-workshop discussions, they can usually move into one-on-one conferences, especially if they have had the opportunity to conference with the teacher once or twice.

Evaluating Writing

The assessment of writing is one of the most difficult and confounding areas in the National Assessment of Educational Progress (NAEP). It is so difficult because the criteria for good writing varies with the type of writing. What is good for expressive, may not be good for explanatory or persuasive. And, of course, there are other more glaring difficulties like writing's resistance to quantifying (Williams, 1979). You cannot go through a piece of writing counting the errors of syntax, spelling, etc. and say that more errors make worse writing. Nor can you say that five errors in mechanics is equal to one error in focus, or coherence. A test of writing must be based on a complete piece of writing.

At this point I want to offer brief difinitions of evaluate and test. By evaluate I mean to decide whether writers are improving in their ability to write meaningful, focused, clear, coherent, organized pieces of writing in different discourse types--expressive, explanatory, persuasive, and literary. By test I mean giving writers writing assignments they have never seen before and asking them to complete the assignment within a predetermined amount of time. The writing rest would be scored either by counting the presence of certain features, by categorizing and coding certain elements, or by carefully standardized holistic judgments of trained raters. There is almost total agreement in the field that multiple-choice tests like the one developed by the Pennsylvania EQA cannot and do not assess writing. In fact, the Standards for Basic Skills Writing Programs document prepared by the National Council of Teachers of English (NCTE) at the request of the United States Office of Education describes the evaluation of individual writing growth in terms of "complete pieces of writing" reflecting "informed judgments, first, about clarity and content and then about conventions of spelling, mechanics, and usage," and emphasizing the "regular responses to individual pieces of student writing as well as periodic assessment measuring growth over a period of time" (College English, 1979). My point is this: students benefit from continual evaluation of their writing when the evaluation takes the form of teacher and peer responses to their writing, not when evaluation takes the form of tests that place their writing in relationship to other students' writing or to some predetermined criteria for good writing. Tests, I argue, are best reserved for assessments of achievement over long periods of time, and only when they are used in a pre-/post test format with careful attention given to assuring they assess the kind of writing students are learning and the way they are learning. These tests must be based on complete scoring guides by carefully trained raters.

To come to grips with the problems of assessing writing, the NAEP staff developed a system of devising and scoring writing assignments built on the discourse triangle of expressive, explanatory, and persuasive (Lloyd-Jones, 1977). The system is called Primary Trait Scoring because each assignment is written with one of the three traits as its main focus. Then a set of criteria for meeting the demands of the assignment is developed and tested in a pilot test. After the criteria have been refined, they are broken up in a four point holistic scale. In this way, raters can be trained in using the criteria for in using the criteria for rating the papers on a scale of 1-4. Actually, the process is much more complicated than the picture I paint because NAEP scores for secondary and tertiary traits along with the primary trait, so raters face a complex set of criteria which they internalize through much tedious practice.

I described the NAEP scoring format because it is the most sophisticated system for scoring, rating, or assessing writing in the world. I mention it also because it is a good example of holistic scoring--assigning papers a number on a sliding scale based on a set of predetermined criteria. But holistic scoring--as useful as it is--has its limits. It cannot, for example, tell us anything diagnostic about a piece of writing. Holistic scoring is designed to report in terms of general criteria. It yeilds a single number. Even if we have the list of criteria that makes for that number, it does not tell us much. Holistic scoring can, on the other hand, provide very good information for scaling or ranking students on a certain kind of writing task, and because of its good reliability and validity for ranking, it can be very useful for pre and posttesting students in and out of writing programs. And, we can, if we really want to stretch it, translate the holistic scores into letter grades but this is really stretching it.

The only other ways I know of rating a piece of writing are outlined in Charles Cooper's fine article on evaluating writing in his book, Measuring and Evaluating Writing (NCTE, 1977). I will not address the various measures he outlines here but I can tell you that none of them lead to assigning grades to individual papers. All the measures are most useful as indices. In other words, they provide us with bench marks over a period of time but none of them make the claim to be able to provide a letter or number grade for an individual piece of writing. In fact, I know of no way to assign letter grades or numerical grades to a single piece of writing. And, furthermore, I am convinced that the assigning of grades to individual papers undermines the purpose of my writing-workshop and directs students to talk about grades--why they got a B instead of an A--when they need to be talking about their papers.

Instead of grading individual papers, we grade student performance over time in our Basic Reading and Writing classes. Students keep complete file folders of all their work, including drafts and revisions. If the folder is incomplete at the end of the marking period, the grade suffers. We take into consideration the student's effort and work, the attention paid to to teacher and peer comments, success, and measured progress. Our students undergo an end of term review much like the NAEP Primary Trait assessment. When they enter the course, they are given an expressive/explanatory assignment to complete in two and one half hours. An assignment of an identical nature is given at the end of the course and in order to go on to another more advanced writing seminar, students must score a 3 or 4 (in the top 50%) on the end of term assignment. We are careful to test with an assignment that is typical of the kind of writing we ask students to do all semester. In this way, we pretest on expressive/explanatory writing, teach expressive/explanatory writing, and posttest on expressive/explanatory writing. This procedure can be easily adapted to any teacher's or school's needs. Teachers could then use the holistic score and the student's performance over time (from the file of the student's writing) as the basis for a letter or rounded numerical grade.

Conclusion

The pedagogy I presented is founded on some convincing theoretical and empirical work in language development and the acquisition of written language abilities. The state of writing instruction in the United States in elementary, and postsecondary schools, is, generally, deplorable. The evidence is solid and pointed: writers are reluctant, frustrated, and poorly taught; teachers do not teach writing and/or they do not teach it well because they are misinformed, often nonwriters, and poorly taught; teacher trainers have not as yet responded to the need for the training of elemantary, secondary, and postsecondary teachers in the teaching of writing.

What exists in the teaching of writing exists not because we do not know how to teach writing but, rather, because we do not value writing (regardless of the public sentiment to the contrary); and because special interests groups have maintained an iron-clad control on the single most influential factor in teaching writing--textbooks advocating exercised in lieu of actual writing and revising. Hopefully, with more national attention to the problems of researching and teaching writing, government agencies, schools, and teacher preparation institutions will recognize the need to teach writing like we teach other things--by doing it and by talking to others about it.

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CHALLENGING EVERY STUDENT THROUGH LITERATURE

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On the opening page of his book Where the Sidewalk Ends, Shel Silverstein, (1974, p.9), issues an "invitation" to all dreamers, wishers, liars, hope-er, pray-ers, magic bean buyers, and pretenders. For those who qualify, he offers the warmth of a fireside for the cozy and comfortable sharing of stories and poems. His is an invitation that ought to be given to all students, whether they are labeled "learning disabled," "average," or "gifted." Students not responding because they don't see themselves as belonging to any of the groups to whom the invitation is offered are missing both an opportunity and a challenge.

In an age that emphasizes preparing students for life, making sure they acquire the competencies needed for survival--in a time of knowledge explosion when there are a mind-boggling number of facts to manipulate, is there any reason to nurture dreamers, wishers, pretenders and even liars among our children? Will dreamers ever be able to succeed in the cut-and-dried world of mathematics?--of science? Will they survive in a world of high technology? Will the wishers ever manage even to finish their homework assignments? Will pretenders be able to relate to the realistic world presented in social studies texts? Of what use are hope-ers and pray-ers with their heads in the clouds? And while we might patronizingly endure a few magic bean-buyers, surely we must strive to eliminate all liars from the ranks of our students!

Or is it possible that precisely the young people who fit into one of these groups will benefit most from their education and consequently have the most to contribute to making the world a better place in which to live? Perhaps the dreamers will be the only real successes in the world of math and science for only they may have the freedom to take the dry facts, separate themselves from conventional modes of thinking and actually add something new to the sophisticated world of advanced technology. Could it be that the pretenders may in fact relate with deeper understanding to different world cultures than those who study social studies content within a purely historical or comparative framework? Maybe the wishers, hope-ers and pray-ers among us who desire with all their hearts for good things to happen will discover within themselves new ways to make their dreams come true.

Perhaps the magic bean buyers will scatter some of their enchanted acquisitions around to help light up the otherwise dreary lives of those near them. There's even hope for the liars--people who make up stories that aren't true--people like Mark Twain, the Brothers Grimm and, more recently, Wil Huygen, who deceived us all the way through the 212 pages of Gnomes!

So you see, characteristics such as those enumerated in Silverstein's opening poem are not to be avoided or stamped out at any cost. On the contrary, as parents and teachers, we ought to exert every effort to cultivate and nurture all our budding dreamers, wishers, and pretenders; we ought to diligently support our young hope-ers and pray-ers and encourage the imaginative thinking of those children who are able to create tales of fun and fancy. How can this be accomplished? By immersing them in a world of literature, by familiarizing them with some of the 45,000 children's books in print, by seizing every chance to share stories and poems with them, by linking the factual and the fanciful, and by encouraging them to respond regularly to the literature they encounter, we can offer our children opportunities and challenges they will find nowhere else.

Values of Literature for Children

You might substitute "father," "teacher," "friend," "brother," "aunt," "grandpa," or the like for "mother" in the following verse, but whatever word is used, it describes both the most important reason and the best way to introduce children to the world of books:

"Richer than kings I shall alway be,
For I had a Mother who read to me." (Author Unknown)

In other words, read to children so that they can catch your love and enthusiasm for literature. But not only is this a way to introduce students to the joys of reading, it also provided a unique challenge for them to learn new and complex language structures. In listening to literature, children have a chance to internalize forms that are not commonly heard in conversational interchange.

In a study of language development of children between six and ten years old, Chomsky (1973) found one common denominator among those children who had acquired certain complex language structures earlier than their peers: they came from homes where books were valued and shared by parents regularly. Through her study Chomsky also highlighted another important feature of language learning--children have neither mastered the understanding of syntax nor the ability to produce certain language structures by the time they are of school-age. So, while you might view the act of reading to children as being most appropriate for pre-schoolers, it can continue to be used at all levels to provide the necessary input for mature language growth.

Another benefit that children gain from hearing literature is that it helps them develop a sense of story. It provides them with the patterns necessary for recognizing conventional beginnings and endings and familiarizes them with structures used by narrators. It nurtures the ability to make predictions--a skill believed by psycholinguists to be of utmost importance for learning to read. As children grow in internalizing the sense of story, their predicting ability increases.

Margaret Spencer (1976) points out the seriousness of lack of exposure to fiction:

> One of the recurrent handicaps of illiterate adults is their inability to anticipate what may happen in a story they are learning to read because they have never learned how the rules of the story are transferred to the print on a page. Most of them were never read to as children (p. 2)

The selection of books to read aloud should be carefully made. Since children's listening comprehension is generally well above their reading ability, they can enjoy hearing stories and poems they would otherwise not read themselves. Then, too, some books might be overlooked unless we share them. For example, middle grade students might not be inclined to pick up a picture book because it looks babyish, yet they can appreciate the media and word images often found there better than younger children. Often, too, the sounds of the language used are so striking they can only really be appreciated when read out loud. Kipling's "The Elephant's Child" is full of such phrases: "...the great grey-green greasy Limpopo River all set about with fever trees..." and "...the bicolored python rock snake with its scalesome flailsome tail" (p. 27).

In her award winning book Bridge to Terabithia Katherine Paterson provides a vivid illustration of a boy reveling in listening to the music of language:

> Like one day while they were working, Judy came down and read out loud to them, mostly poetry and some of it in Italian which of course, Jess couldn't

> understand, but he buried his head in the rich sounds of the words and let himself be wrapped warmly around in the feel of the Burkes' brilliance (p. 69).

As children progress and become more independent readers, literature can provide additional challenges for studying language directly and for becoming more sensitive to the power of words. Psycholinguists who engage in charting the use and understanding of language label children's ability to reflect on their own language "metallinguistic awareness." An entire volume could be filled with books useful for fostering this awareness; a few ideas are suggested here.

Types and Examples of Books for Language Development

I. Fiction is useful for developing story sense and for studying characterization, plot, and setting. In addition, many stories help sensitize children to the idiosyncracies of language.

DUVOISIN, ROGER. *Periwinkle*. A frog and a giraffe discover that rules are needed for communication with each other.

NORDSTURM, URSULA. *The Secret Language*. Two girls make up their own language for talking to each other and excluding others.

PARISH, PEGGY. *Amelia Bedelia*. Amelia's literal interpretation of phrases such as "draw the drapes" amuses children and provides them with opportunities to think of alternative meanings.

II. Some books invite children to play with the sounds of language.

BROWN, MARCIA. *Peter Piper's Alphabet*. A book of tongue twisters.

EMBERLEY, BARBARA. *Drummer Hoff*. A cumulative tale good for vocabulary development as well as for repetition of rhymes.

McPHAIL, DAVID. *Oh*, *No*, *Go*. Only three words are used to demonstrate intonation patterns.

MERRIAM, EVE. *It Doesn't Always Have to Rhyme*. A collection of poems illustrating some of the many forms of poetry.

MOSEL, ARLENE. *Tikki, Tikki, Tembo*. A Chinese child in this tale has a long alliterative name that is fun to repeat.

STEIG, WILLIAM, *C D B*. What looks like a secret code is solved by saying the letters aloud.

III. Bocks that highlight certain features of language help children sharpen their linguistic awareness.

BREWTON, JOHN E. and BLACKBURN, G. MEREDITH III. My Tongue's Tangled and Other Ridiculous Situations. Demonstrates what happens when punctuation marks are missing.

HANLON, EMILY. How a Horse Grew Hoarse on the Site Where He Sighted a Bare Bear. A tale is told using forty homonyms.

SOPIS, KENNETH and SOPIS, JOSEPHINE. Read Me...Or Else. Appropriate for children in the intermediate grades, this book examines the language used in advertising.

IV. Alphabet books vary widely. Often in addition to teaching the alphabet, they are based on a theme and can aid concept development.

MENDOZA, GEORGE. Norman Rockwell's Americana ABC. Using this famous artist's pictures, the author provides an alphabet book that is as American as the Fourth of July and apple pie.

V. Folk tales--Unlike the straightforward prose of today's fiction, the language used in these stories is quaint and picturesque. In Lang's "Cinderella" (1964) the stepsisters send for the best "tirewoman." In Steele's "The Old Woman and Her Pig" (1918) the following words are used: "stile," "quench," "crooked," "sixpence," "shan't," and "yonder."

Other Uses of Literature

Folk tales have advantages other than being sources for language study. They can provide content for examining and comparing different cultures and for discovering the universality of the human experience. Every culture has its witches and wolves, its stepmothers, godmothers and tricksters. Themes stay the same even though variations abound.

Since they come from an oral tradition, folk tales were changed slightly as they were told and retold. Then, when they were written down, other adaptations were made. Translations brought additional variation, and modifications and simplifications continue to be made even today as writers attempt to make the stories more readable for modern children. Often, people are unaware of just how many forms there are of individual tales. Therein lies the challenge: different versions can be examined with regard to specific events that occur, character development, settings, style of writing and ways the stories end. Children might research the countries of their origins and the approximate dates they were first published.

Not many parents and teachers realize that the Brothers Grimm were philologists who studied the language and grammar of the stories they collected (Huck, 1976). They were careful to preserve the style and content of tales as they were told by poor people who had suffered many hardships. These folks told of cruel deeds in vividly bitter language. The original German versions were written for adult audiences and consequently are usually not appropriate for children. Fortunately, there are adaptations and translations which can be compared with tales originating in other countries. For example, here is a beginning list of stories with the Cinderella theme:

African - Nomi and the Magic Fish by Phumia Mbano.

English - "Tattercoats" in English Fairy Tales. Edited by Flora Annie Steele.

French - Cinderella by Charles Perrdult.

German - "Aschenputtel" in Household Tales by Grimm. Translated by Lucy Crane.

Norwegian - "The Princess on the Glass Hill" in Favorite Fairy Tales Told in Norway. Edited By Virginia Haviland.

Bruno Bettelheim in his book The Uses of Enchantment (1976) provides another reason for using folk and fairy tales with children. He maintains that though they are set in never-never land and deal with fantastic events, such tales conduct a "moral education" subtler and richer than any type of story within a child's comprehension. He feels that because of this, they provide suitable content for children learning to read. "The acquisition of skills, including the ability to read, becomes devalued when what one has learned to read adds nothing of importance to one's life" (p.4).

Other authors have suggested that literature might be used to foster moral development. In a study with adolescents Keefe (1975) examined the effects of using short stories to engage readers in responses centering on moral issues. He found that regular discussions following the reading of the stories did influence moral development.

Huck (1976) agrees that literature can provide the stimulus for in-depth discussion of values but she warns against using them to impose our own beliefs on children. "The real danger in any form of values clarification is that the teacher may turn the discussion into a moralistic session" (p. 737). Through careful use of questioning, however, this danger can be avoided and children can be helped to examine actions presented in the literature, weigh alternatives and develop problem-solving strategies.

The wording of appropriate questions, therefore, is critical. A pattern of routinely asked questions that focus on literal interpretations of stories will result in boredom with the process and will do little to broaden children's perspectives. Yet, the planning of discussions need not be rigid. Adults should be familiar enough with litetature, with the needs of children, and with the range of questions possible to be flexible in guiding book discussions. As children get opportunities to read and share books and are encouraged to respond in various ways, they become increasingly capable of directing discussions themselves. One way to assess the effectiveness of a literature program is to listen to the ratio of adult-student talk. If discussions are dominated by adults, chances are the questions used tend to be convergent and narrow. As divergence of response is encouraged, students' involvement will increase proportionately.

Divergent Populations

It is precisely in this divergence that we can use literature to challenge every student. Whether we are dealing with a fairly homogeneous group or an individual child with special needs, accommodations can be made to use good books regularly for many purposes. They can: improve the reader's self-concept, enhance learning in all content areas, provide appropriate material for reading development and concept formation, reveal the beauty of language, and generally enrich the lives of children.

Heterogeneously Grouped Children

In a large majority of classes teachers find it useful to lessen the degree of heterogeneity by grouping children according to skill attainment levels. Through a well-designed literature program other alternatives are available. Teachers can capitalize on the differences found within their classes; they might choose not to group at all for some experiences, to group according to interests, or to individualize. In any event, uniform responses to books read will neither be expected nor desired. The range of possibilities with even one book is limitless. One way to plan for literature extensions is through webbing, as explained below.

A picture book entitled Frederick by Leo Lionni tells about a special field mouse who didn't prepare for winter in the same way as the rest of his mouse family. Instead of collecting nuts and berries, Frederick amassed sun rays, colored, and words--"...for the cold winter days are dark...and grey...and we will run out of things to say" (pp. 12, 14, 16).

After sharing this book with a group of children a web could be developed as in figure 1. No one would ever want a class to pursue all these possibilities for fear of destroying a book with too much attention. Having brainstormed these activities a teacher can link knowledge of the potential of the book with children's interests, past experiences, and growing abilities.

Essentially all children have the same options for varied responses open to them. There are unique advantages to using literature with special populations, though, and sometimes certain adjustments need to be made.

Learning Disabled Children

Learning disabled children are generally described as being average or above average in intelligence; nevertheless, they experience special problems in processing information. A high percentage of those identified as learning disabled find learning to read and write a nearly impossible task. Because they know they aren't "dumb," they suffer great frustration at not being able to deal with the written code with as much ease as their peers. They are frequently characterized as being hyperactive, not able to attend to anything for any length of time and are sometimes labeled "troublemakers."

For this group of children literature has much to offer. Even though initially they might not be able to read stories and poems independently, they should not be denied the riches of good books. Stories can be read to them either individually or in small groups. Since learning disabled children tend to be distracted by too much stimuli, carrels equipped with recordings and earphones, where books can be enjoyed undisturbed, are highly desirable. Teachers ought to seize every opportunity to read with individual children perhaps employing the Neurological Impress Method (Heckleman, 1969) as an aid to their becoming independent readers.

Brief discussions which follow the sharing of books can serve several purposes. First, they can give alert teachers clues about specific skill strengths of their students, their levels of concept development, and interests that can be capitalized on later. Secondly, the content of the books can be used to improve the way these children view themselves; they can learn about famous people who have succeeded despite severe learning problems. Thirdly, following events in a story may cultivate a sense of sequence and directionality which is often under-developed.

Literature extensions should not be limited to discussions, however. Learning disabled children should be given every chance to respond according to any of the possibilities appropriate for them. While they have deficits in one or more areas, they generally can find an alternate mode of expression, such as through art, drama, or oral response.

Emotionally Disturbed Children

Often children with emotional problems also have difficulty learning. Sometimes it is hard to tell which problem came first. Many of the suggestions given for learning disabled children are also appropriate here. A carefully controlled environment is essential. One special advantage to using literature with children with emotional problems is that it can elicit feelings, help with their identification and, through response options, provide an acceptable outlet for those feelings. Rather that lengthy discussions, art and writing activities may be preferred.

Remedial Readers

This term is usually used to designate children who are not achieving according to potential but who suffer no perceptual handicaps. Often their problems are related to lack of experience, weak motivation, or a history of underacheivement which results in poor self-concept.

A strong literature program can enhance first-hand experiences which ought to be disigned for these students. In addition, it can help the children broaden their perspectives through vicarious living. Most importantly, students who have not been motivated to read dull texts can be turned on by a careful selection of trade books. Motivation leads to success and with success comes improved self-esteem.

Physically and Mentally Handicapped

Obvious adjustments by way of materials and mode of presentation are necessary in order to make literature available to children who have physical or mental limitations. The rewards of bringing understanding, acceptance and beauty into their lives should more than compensate for any effort needed to bring these children and book together. Good literature can stretch their imaginations, challenge their thinking, teach them about other children who are different, and let them savor the delicacy of a well-turned phrase. Response options should be just as open as for other students. Rather than place any additional limitations on them, let us provide new avenues for expression through experiences with books.

Children in Mainstreamed Classes

There are two groups of children who experience psychological tension in mainstreamed classes: those who are newly introduced into this setting and those who welcome their mainstreamed companions. Literature can be a powerful aid in minimizing differences between these two groups. It provides a common ground of experience where sharing and caring can be nurtured. Activities should be encouraged that require cooperation in reasearching a topic or responding to a good story or poem. Children involved in dramatizing a narrative, developing a mural or composing a radio scrip in collaboration with their peers have no time or energy for worrying about surface differences.

The Gifted

Very talented young people often find themselves bored with ordinary assignments and expectations. More than any other students, they need challenges. This does not mean they should be left alone to do their own thing. Through sensitive guidance and skillful questioning, gifted students can become literary critics in the best sense of the word. They can use their superior ability to compare the works of various authors or to analyze the craft of a specific writer. Their interactions with books ought to lead to a wide range of composing experiences which help them explore and refine their own writing abilities. Put talented students in touch with appropriate literature--expect excellence in their responses and that's what you'll get.

The Real Challenge

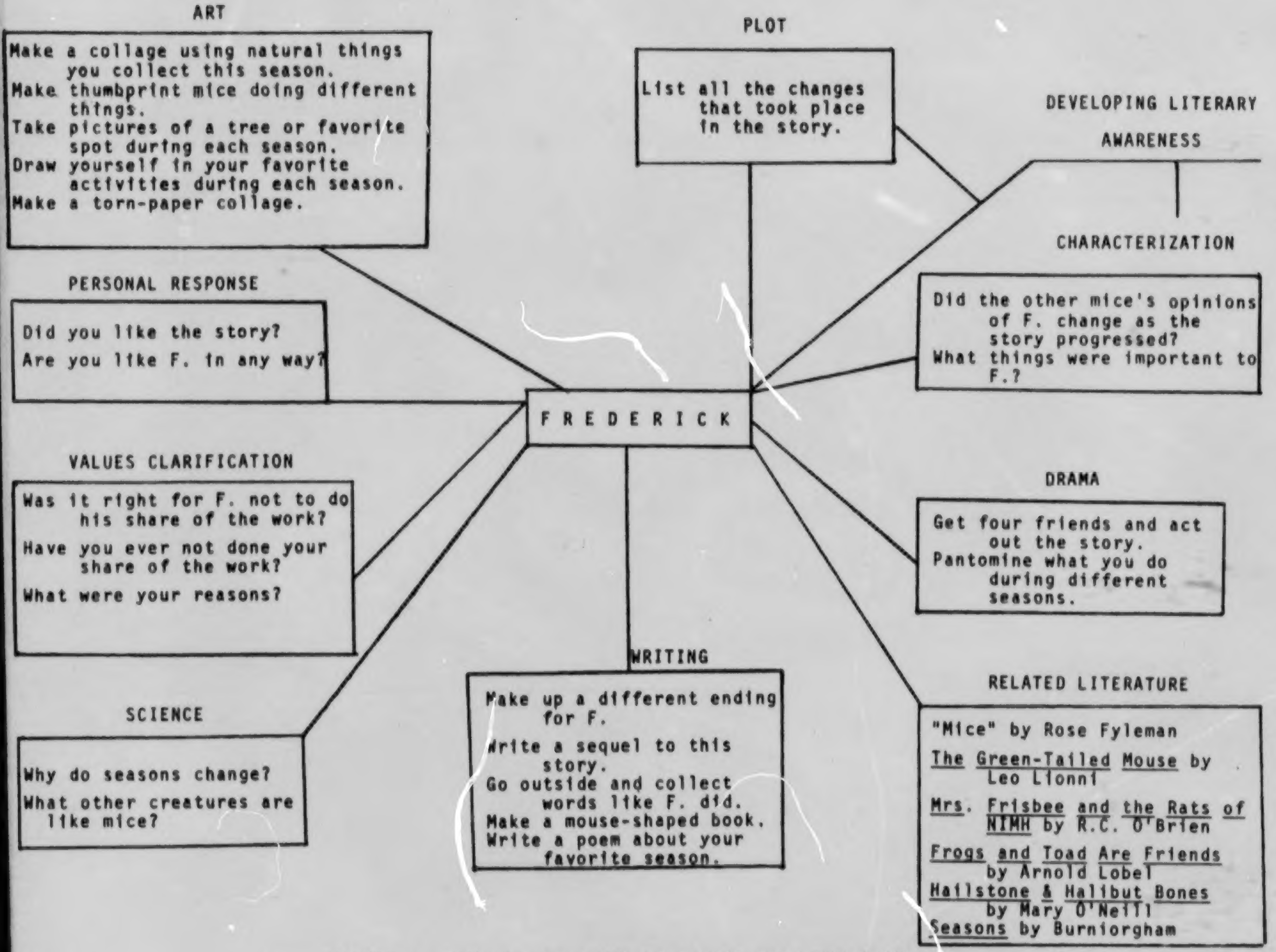
Perhaps the greatest challenge of all is to adults who want to bring young people and literature together. If we are to help students benefit from encounters with books and poems, we need to be aware of their interests and developmental levels, as well as their individual strengths and differences. We need to stimulate their curiosity and creativity and awaken their unique talents as dreamers, pretenders, wishers, liars, and magic bean-buyers. But, first of all, we must become acquainted with a wide variety of literature ourselves. So, perhaps the first step is to follow Nikki Giovanni's example as expressed in her poem "Winter":

Frogs bruuow the mud
Snails bury themselves
And I air my quilts
Preparing for the cold.

Dogs grow more hair
Mothers make oatmeal
And little boys and girls
Take Father John's Medicine.

Bears store fat
Chipmunks gather nuts
And I collect books
For the coming winter.*

*From Cotton Candy on a Rainy Day
Copyright 1978 by Nikki Giovanni
By permission of William Morrow & Co.



ART

Make a collage using natural things you collect this season.
Make thumbprint mice doing different things.
Take pictures of a tree or favorite spot during each season.
Draw yourself in your favorite activities during each season.
Make a torn-paper collage.

PLOT

List all the changes that took place in the story.

DEVELOPING LITERARY AWARENESS

CHARACTERIZATION

Did the other mice's opinions of F. change as the story progressed?
What things were important to F.?

PERSONAL RESPONSE

Did you like the story?
Are you like F. in any way?

FREDERICK

VALUES CLARIFICATION

Was it right for F. not to do his share of the work?
Have you ever not done your share of the work?
What were your reasons?

DRAMA

Get four friends and act out the story.
Pantomine what you do during different seasons.

SCIENCE

Why do seasons change?
What other creatures are like mice?

WRITING

Make up a different ending for F.
Write a sequel to this story.
Go outside and collect words like F. did.
Make a mouse-shaped book.
Write a poem about your favorite season.

RELATED LITERATURE

"Mice" by Rose Fyleman
The Green-Tailed Mouse by Leo Lionni
Mrs. Frisbee and the Rats of NIMH by R.C. O'Brien
Frogs and Toad Are Friends by Arnold Lobel
Hailstone & Halibut Bones by Mary O'Neill
Seasons by Burniorgham

FIGURE 1. EXAMPLE OF A WEB DEVELOPED FROM FREDERICK.

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TEACHING ENGLISH, READING AND WRITING TO VIETNAMESE CHILDREN

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"Chào bà. Tôi tên la Mài." ("Good morning. My name is Mai.") Such a greeting is not uncommon on many American classrooms. Because of the recent influx of thousands of Vietnamese refugees, many teachers find themselves confronted with the challenge of assimilating Vietnamese children into their classroom who speak little or no English. This challenge is often accompanied by apprehensions resulting from lack of knowledge of: cultural background; language contrasts; and principles, metnods, and techniques for teaching English as a second language to Vietnamese children. In order to allay the fears of coping with this situation, the first step is to become acquainted with the subject -- the Vietnamese child.

Cultural Background

Three aspects of the Vietnamese cultural background cause initial concern for the teacher: names, personality, and customs. Americans are often confused about the correct way to address the Vietnamese. Vietnamese surname come first, followed by the middle name, then the given name (Binh, Diller, and Sutherland, 1975):

For example:

Husband:	Nguyen Family	Ky Middle	Anh First
Wife:	Huynh Family	Thi Middle	Huong First

Children: Bear the father's family name.

Nguyen Thi Vyen (Daughter)

Nguyen Ky Ty (Son)

The name used in address is given name; thus Mr. Anh or Mrs. Huong.

In Vietnamese, there are no personal pornouns such as the English "I" or "you" (Binh, et al., 1975) to refer to one's self as the one spoken to or the one spoken about. Instead, the Vietnamese use a series of nouns, most of which are kinship terms such as "father" or "mother". These nouns of address in Vietnamese vary according to sex, age, social status, degree of familiarity, and type of personal relationship with the person addressed. For example, a man will refer to himself as anh (older brother) when speaking to his wife and as con (child) when speaking to his father. When addressing someone superior to oneself in family or social rank, the word thua is inserted before the noun. For example, Thua Thay is used to address a male teacher.

In order to teach Vietnamese children, it is important to understand the basic Vietnamese personality. It is risky, however, to generalize statements read or heard about Vietnam to all Vietnamese people. Individual traits, social status, educational background, and degree of Westernization all influence the behavior of the Vietnamese people. Still, there are certain general behavorial patterns which have evolved from cultural influences.

Since the time of Confucius, the five Confucian virtues of propriety, humanity, wisdom, righeousness, and faithfulness have guided the Vietnamese people in their daily conduct ("Perspectives", 1976). Propriety is observed by the formality of interpersonal relationships whereby the Vietnamese place a high value on decorum, etiquette, and ceremony. This is reflected also in their need for reciprocity when they recieve a gift or compliment.

The teachings of the philosopher, Lao-Tzu (6th century B.C.), direct the Vietmanese to seek self-realization through the achievement of harmony in their emotions and in the natural development of all things. This, coupled with the virtue of humanity, often influences the Vietnamese to be benevolent and appear passive in a variety of situations. The Vietnamese may answer "yes" to a question requiring a "no" answer or fail to raise questions at all in order to avoid confrontations. The virtue of wisdom is reflected in the Vietnamese characteristics of "tánh hiếu hoc" (love or learning) and "tánh cầncù" (industriousness).

Faithfulness, another essential virtue, is demonstrated in the Vietnamese quality of "permanence" in which personal relationships are cultivated and personal items are purchased only after careful consideration. It also should be noted that the Vietnamese favor a "pluralistic" approach to life, allowing themselves to be comfortable with an assortment of alternatives rather than searching for the one best alternative to a situation.

Several other customs and habits of the Vietnamese stand out in importance. The Vietnamese holidays differ from American holidays (Nguyen, n.d.). Their holidays are based on the lunar calendar and are influenced by the cultural and historical events of the country. Consequently, they may fall on different dates each year on our Gregorian calender. There are thirteen holidays celebrated each year. The main holiday is "Tet" (New Year's Celebration), which occurs during the first seven days of the first month of the lunar calendar. This corresponds to late January or early February on our Gregorian calendar. In importance, "Tet" is comparable to our Thanksgiving and Christmas combined.

Vietnamese and American customs differ in other ways (Los Angeles, 1974). The Vietnamese families (grandparents, parents, children, and other dependents) tend to live in the same household. They eat hot pepper, powerful fish sauce, and garlic with their meals. Their table manners may include boarding-house reaches and picking up a bowl with both hands. The subjects of death and personal matters are not discussed in public. Finally, reading maps, estimating miles, functioning in our measurement system, identifying various shades of color, understanding our Gregorian calendar, and the concept of punctuality may all be areas of confusion for the Vietnamese learner and require special attention by the teacher. Along with this basic understanding of the Vietnamese child, the teacher needs knowledge of the contrasts that exist between the English and Vietnamese languages before effective teaching can be provided.

Language Contrasts

The "Quốc Ngữ" or "National Language" of Vietnam (Binh and Gage, 1975) was first developed during the seventeenth century by Alenander of Rhodes. The writing system, based on the Roman Alphabet, consists of twenty-three letters closely representing the spoken form of the Vietnamese language. The letter Đ is added and the letters F, J, W, and Z are deleted from the Roman Alphabet. Vietnamese is a tonal language with every word having a particular tonal association. The diacritical marks placed over and under the vowel letters distinguish the various tones. In English, however, tones are usually associated with sentences, not words, and referred to as intonation patterns. The Vietnamese language is monosyllabic in nature with hyphens used to represent polysyllabic words.

As in English, consonants and vowels occur in Vietnamese. Diphthongs (combinations of different vowel sounds) are particularly important. In comparing the phonologies of Vietnamese and English, we should be concerned with three groups of sounds

("A Brief Look", 1976): (1) those which occur in similar patterns in both languages (e.g. m as in men, spelled m in Vietnamese as in ma "ghost"), (2) those which occur in English, but not in Vietnamese (e.g. oo as in book, and (3) those sounds which occur in both languages will not present a problem for the Vietnamese student. Sounds which occur in English but not in Vietnamese will give the learner the most trouble. S/he must directly be taught to distinguish them from other sounds. In addition, sounds which pattern differently will create problems for the Vietnamese student. There are no consonant clusters in Vietnamese and few consonants occur in the final position. Since intonation patterns do not exist in Vietnamese, these children must be taught to associate tones with sentences, and not words, as they do in Vietnamese.

Both English and Vietnamese have what linguists call aspirated and unaspirated stops. In Vietnamese the distinction between the two is especially important. Aspirated stops are produced by stopping the air flow from the lungs, then releasing it in such a way that there is a strong puff of air following the release (e.g. p as in span). In Vietnamese the sounds represented by the letters C, K, and T are unaspirated and they occur in positions where English unaspirated stops do not occur. Therefore, they are difficult to distinguish. To Americans, the Vietnamese c and k will sound like g as in get and t will sound like d as in dog.

Vietnamese structure is fundamentally similar to English ("Teaching English Structures", 1976). Basic word order (e.g. subject, verb, and object), the use of function words (e.g. that), and nouns without gender are a few similarities. However, differences in the Vietnamese language include: no verb conjugations or inflectional endings; plurality indicated by function words placed before the noun or verb; and the ommission of the verb form of be.

The two basic question types in English, yes-no and wh-questions involve rearranging the word order of a verb phrase, a practice not followed in Vietnam. The word "không" placed in front of a verb indicates a negative construction.

The use of articles (e.g. an), a difficult concept to grasp in English, is especially difficult for Vietnamese learners. Just as mass nouns in English require a classifier when parts of them are being talked about (e.g. a bar of soap), so do nearly all nouns of Vietnamese require classifiers. This use of classifiers, and the fact that they parallel the behavior of mass nouns in English, cause Vietnamese learners to generalize that all English nouns are mass nouns.

Principles, Methods and Techniques

Understanding the learner brings the teacher to the half-way point in the process of teaching the Vietnamese child. The second half of this process involves becoming familiar with some of the basic principles which form the foundation of effective English as a Second Language (ESL) instruction.

Principles The creation of a classroom climate conducive for learning is important with limited English speaking children. The teacher who is cognizant of cultural differences, language barriers, and the emotional make-up of his/her students will employ a variety of methods, techniques, and materials geared to meet the needs of the students. The various methods of teaching English as a Second Language, as well as, the simplest classroom techniques, are derived from certain basic principles. Those principles most commonly recognized by leaders in ESL instruction include the following: (Finocchiaro, 1974; Paulston and Bruder, 1976; Rivers and Temperly, 1978):

1. The goals of communicative competence should pervade all stages of development of second language learning.
2. Development of listening, speaking, reading, and writing skills should be incorporated into the second language learning program. These skills evolve in a hierarchal manner and should be introduced accordingly.
3. Second language learning should be primarily oral in its initial stages. Orally learned material can be later encountered in written form.
4. Language items which will be useful to meet immediate needs in the classroom, school, and community should be stressed in the initial stages of second language learning.
5. Language items should be presented in context to insure understanding. Later items may be separated for isolated practice.
6. Basic skills of pronunciation, vocabulary, and grammar should be presented and practiced systematically in a graded progression. The amount of repetitive practice depends upon the utility of the item and individual student needs.
7. There are two levels of language learning: mechanical skill and understanding. Each is necessary for second language proficiency.
8. Language items should be continually presented in larger language contexts in a spiral approach to learning.
9. Active rather than passive teaching methods should be employed; students should be vigorous participants.
10. Learners should be taught the sound system of the second language. Isolated

practice may be necessary for the discrimination and production of difficult sounds. However, sounds first practiced in isolation soon should be inserted words, phrases, or sentences which have the rhythm stress, and juncture characteristic of the second language.

11. The structure system (i.e. grammar) of the second language should be taught. This includes syntax (i.e. word order), and morphology (i.e. inflection and word forms).

12. Vocabulary development should be subordinate to the development of the sounds and grammar of the second language. Vocabulary words of high frequency and immediate need should be stressed at this stage of development.

13. Formal explanations or basic rules which govern arrangements of sounds, words, and structures in the second language may be taught inductively or deductively. The complexity of the pattern to be learned and the aptitude and proficiency of the students should act as a guide in the teacher's approach. The deductive approach is usually employed with students functioning at the beginning stages of learning.

14. Learning about the culture, gestures, and idioms characteristic of the second language should be incorporated throughout the second language learning program to enhance understanding.

The soundest of principles are of little value standing alone. In order to translate these principles into practice, there must be a transition from the theoretical framework to the more commonly recognized methods of teaching ESL students.

General Methods Different Methods for teaching ESL students have achieved popularity during different periods in our country's development (Rivers, 1980). In the 1930's, the Grammar-Translation Method, stressing the translation of selected passages, was employed. During World War II, the Audio-Lingual Method, emphasizing the oral aspects of the language, was used to train interpreters. By the 1960's, Cognitive Code advocates pushed for a revival of the understanding of grammatical structures, de-emphasizing the oral aspects of the language. Today, modified Audio-Lingual and Cognitive Methods and their variations are often integrated into eclectic teaching methods, a variety of which are currently in vogue.

Paulston and Bruder (1976) distinguish among mechanical, meaningful, and communicative drills in their method. Their major objective is the use of language for communicative purposes. Situational Reinforcement (Gordon and Anisman, 1978) is a "communication-oriented" language program devoloped by Hall and requiring beginning students to listen, repeat, then engage in a controlled situation involving teacher-student dialogue, and finally, student-student dialogue.

Real-life situations that demand the student's active attention through pictorial aids are proposed by Von Elek and Oskarssen. Schumann, in his AV-Structural-Global Method, seeks to develop concepts through carefully structured dialogues illustrated with filmstrips. Listening comprehension is fostered by two methods developed in the early 1970's. The Rapid Acquisition Method, designed by Harris and Reed, discourages speaking until a high degree of listening comprehension is achieved. Asher, in his Total Physical Response Program, has students listen to a command and then carry it out (Davidson, 1978).

This thumbnail sketch of the methods which have evolved over the years is intended only as a general reference point. None of the methods has been proven to be superior over any other. Each must be examined and/or employed according to student needs, circumstances, and program goals.

Once the principles and general methods of teaching ESL students are recognized, the teacher's imagination is his/her only limit in developing specific methods and techniques for teaching language arts to Vietnamese students. To assist in bringing about this creative unfolding, some specific methods and techniques in the oral-aural, reading, and writing areas will be described below.

Oral-Aural Methods and Techniques The oral-aural methods emphasize hearing and speaking a language before trying to read it. Teacher-directed listening activities center upon specific types of listening: listening to speakers, listening to a conversation, listening to a story, listening to dramatizations, and listening to choral readers. Oral practice is obtained by questions, retelling stories, following directions, and dramatizing. Instruction can be individualized through the use of listening centers, and listening lessons can be incorporated into all the activities designed to develop speaking skills. The specific sequence of skills taught depends upon the individual needs of the Vietnamese students.

Sounds which exist in English but not in Vietnamese are generally taught very early in the language program (English in Kindergarten, 1975). Proceeding from the concept of "same-different" with objects to sounds, the teacher states minimal pairs, illustrated with pictures whenever possible and has the students repeat them (e.g. chair-share). S/he then asks if the words included in a minimal pair sentence are the same or different. Students may dramatize each sentence or identify an appropriate picture (e.g. I am watching/washing the dishes); then may pronounce words and sentences, that the teacher has modeled, individually or as a group. Providing a variety of recorded language material for listening experiences and using games appropriate to the age and interest level of the students will enhance group and individual pronounciation drill practice.

The basic sentence patterns of English may be introduced and practiced through a variety of structured drills. Sample drills include (Ching, 1976):

a. Mim-Mem (Mimicry-Memorization)--Students imitate a model and repeat it until it is memorized.

b. Chain-Drill--The teacher makes a statement (e.g. Jack is walking.) and individual students take turns repeating the statement.

c. Simple Substitution Drill--A word is replaced by another word of the same grammatical class, such as a noun for a noun.

d. Replacement Drill--Replace one element by a different element, as a pronoun for a noun.

e. Conversion Drill--Replace one form of a word with another, as past for present tense.

f. Expansion Drill--Give the student a word to be added to the sentence (e.g. Fred bought a shirt. Red).

g. Transformation Drill--Change in word order as from a question to an affirmative or negative statement.

h. Completion Drill--The student is instructed to complete the sentence with a particular form class (e.g. adverb).

Other drills such as Question-Answer Drills and Conversation Drills are also helpful.

Students need to practice intonation, stress, and rhythm beginning with the first pattern drills. They cannot learn everything at once, but can be guided to at least imitate and understand the basic patterns. Hearing, imitating, and repeating are the key words to be remembered in teaching correct stress, intonation, and rhythm. The rhythm of English differs from that of most other languages because of the practice of pronouncing unstressed syllables quickly in middle or lower tones. The few stressed syllables thus sound loud and high.

Once students have a basic command of English, it is time to begin teaching conversation techniques, some of which are (Dobson, 1974): opening a conversation, nominating a topic, asking for clarification, asking for more information, changing a topic, and ending a conversation. Initially, directed conversation practice is suggested. Later, spontaneous interchange must be encouraged and fostered. Dialogues, improvizations, and role-playing help limited English speaking students to develop communicative competence in English. Real-life experiences, poetry, and language games are just a few ways to stimulate conversation.

Reading Methods and Techniques Classroom teachers often have to assume the responsibility of teaching Vietnamese children to read. A cardinal rule to remember is that formal reading instruction should not begin before the child has acquired oral English language skills. The development of listening and speaking abilities prevents mechanical pronounciation of words without meaning attached.

Initially, concentrate on vocabulary that will be beneficial for coping with school life on a daily basis. Once that vocabulary is mastered, specialized vocabulary (e.g. American holidays, etc.) can be introduced gradually as the need arises. The following are Do's to guide the teacher in his/her planning (Ebel, n.d.):

1. Do emphasize letter-sound relationships, not letter-name relationships.
2. Do have the child encounter vocabulary and grammatical structures orally before beginning formal reading instruction.
3. Do have the child read whole phrases and sentences rather than isolated words as much as possible.
4. Do provide exposure to native English speech through listening activities.
5. Do remember that grammatical structures, not just vocabulary, determine sentence and passage complexity.

Oral language development, vocabulary and concept development, and grammatical structure development should not be assumed to be completed once formal reading instruction begins. This is why the Language Experience Approach is often advocated for teaching reading to ESL students (Lee and Allen, 1963). Through experiences and field trips inskde ant outside the school, the communication skills of listening, speaking, reading, and writing are developed together. All the senses can be involved to develop the meaning of new vocabulary words. Words, such as verbs, that cannot be visualized as specific objects are the most difficult to present to Vietnamese children. These words (e.g. walk; See me walk to the table.) can be dramatized by the teacher to develop their meaning. After teacher dramatizations, students should be called upon to perform actions to see if they really do understand the differences between walk and run, and the basic concepts such as off and on. Experiences are shaped, discussed, and finally dictated into stories. The teacher reads the stories first, followed by the students. The students eventually read the stories without teacher aid. An opportunity to read the new worlds in various contexts and situations should be provided. Expanded vocabularies and improved comprehension are major goals of this method.

The audio-lingual techniques and drills described in the Oral-Aural section are recommended for helping the ESL child learn the grammatical elements of standard English. Once these elements are mastered orally, practice in reading written patterns is necessary. Cards containing words and phrases can be put together by students to form complete sentences. Finding the correct grammatical structure to complete a sentence can also be used (e.g. Jane________to school today. walking, walk, walked). Specific drills practiced orally can be viewed visually. Questions pertaining to the sentences can be asked or specific words left out to ascertain student understanding of the structures (e.g. Jane is going to school. _______going to school.)

"Snap Reading" (Cortex, 1975) is proposed as a practical teaching technique to aid in the improvement of listening and oral reading skills. It requires the teacher to read orally at a normal speed and to stop periodically and snap his/her finger. This signals a student to read the next word. Students are to read their individual words with the proper pronunciation and intonation so that the natural flow of the language is not distorted. It is most appropriate during the beginning stages of second language insturction. Snap reading is considered to be a supportive intermediary step between the teacher's coal reading and the student's oral reading.

A "cloze-like" porcedure can be presented as a follow-up activity. Each student is given a mimeographed sheet of the reading passage, with various words deleted. Blank spaces of equal length are inserted in the passage in their place. The missing words are written at the bottom of the page in a scrambled order and the students must complete the passage with the correct words. Because of a student's familiarity with the passage, this may appear to be purely a memory test. However, the students must rely upon syntactical and semantic clues, not just memory, to complete the exercise correctly.

The "Read and Look Up" technique (Paulston and Bruder, 1976) was developed by Michael West. The technique essentially evolves in this manner. The teacher reads each sentence of a passage and has the student repeat it. Then starting back at the beginning of the passage, the teacher tells the student to "Read the first sentence silently. When the teacher says "Speak", the student looks up at the teacher and reproduces the sentence orally. This process continues, sentence by sentence, to the end of the selection. Breaks in "thought units" are pointed out to avoid mechanical word calling and encourage comprehension. Comprehension questions are asked for each read-passage. The student must answer each question in a complete sentence. To move further from memorization, the student eventually is encouraged to paraphrase sentences read by the teacher. The complexity of the sentences increase as the students progress Advanced students may be asked to delete extraneous words inserted to detract from the meaning (e.g. The young girl was red sitting on the porch doing her homework.)

A modified "cloze" procedure (Plaister, 1973) is sometimes used to teach reading to more advanced ESL students. This procedure is based upon the Gestalt principle of closure. This is the tendency to perceive wholes when small parts are missing. Students are asked to read sentences and passages and fill in deleted words. Words are deleted on a regular basis, such as every fifth or eighth word, or in an arbitrary fashion such as the deletion of all nouns. Dashes to indicate the number of letters missing or blanks of standard length are used with more advanced students. Words which are grammatically and lexically correct are discussed, and finally comprehension exercises are devised.

Finocchiaro (1974) advocates the "parallel stream concept" for teaching reading to second language learners. This method requires the systematic teaching of individual elements at the same time. Meaningful material is heard and read with the teacher's guidance. It is the teacher's responsibility to help the students do the following: coordinate eye movements, link auditory symbols to visual symbols, recognize grammatical units, read in thought groups, learn the spelling patterns that are basic to reading (e.g. cvc) and grasp the full meaning of an utterance through phonological, grammatical, and lexical signals and symbols.

She identifies five stages if development which serve as a model for reading instruction. In Stage I, the students read the material they have learned orally. They then recite the material without looking at it. Next, the teacher reads the material aloud as the students follow along. Finally, the selection is read in unison with the teacher or by individual students. The learned words and structures practiced in Stage I are combined in a variety of new contexts designed by the teacher in Stage II. Practice with these language items is continued with the gradual introduction of unfamiliar words and structures in Stage III. A step by step progression from simplified and adapted material to regular commercial texts with unlimited grammatical structures and styles is recommended in Stages IV and V.

There is no single best way to teach reading to Vietnamese students. However, this does not mean that anything and everything works. The ideas presented above should act as a catalyst to help the teacher develop specific methods and techniques which meet the individual needs of his/her students. Teacher directed activities, peer tutoring, and listening devices can all be used to avoid monotony in the learning situation. The tape recorder, Language Master machine, System 80 machine, and Hoffman reader are all good supportive devices which can be used for individualized practice.

Writing Methods and Techniques Students learning a second language need to learn how to communicate in speech first, then through reading, and finally in writing. They need to learn how to incorporate all that they have learned orally into written discourse. This written discourse proves to be a formidable challenge for many students. This is why the Language Experience Approach is often advocated for developing oral composition skills and writing skills concomitantly. Regardless of the approach, however, a logical sequential development plan, along with patience and motivation, should help to alleviate student fears. This writing plan should include numerous types of writing exercises that vary in purpose and complexity.

Handwriting practice may need to precede formal writing lessons. At first formal writing lessons should center around copying activities. Students can compare their finished product with the original work, checking for correct order, spelling, and punctuation. After mastering simple copying techniques, copying drill exercised provide sentence expansion practice (e.g. Mr. Jones is an old man. (friendly) Mr. Jones is a friendly old man.).

If the student is experiencing difficulties with grasping the concept of sentence structure, the teacher must seek the cause of the problem before assigning corrective exercises. Controlled exercises in weak areas should help the students construct English sentences. Combining short kernel sentences or shortening long convoluted sentences taken from the student's own writing are options available to the writer.

Students can be insturcted to construct sentences using given parts of speech, first by following a particular sentsnce pattern, and later following any sentance pattern (Raimes, 1979).

Once sentence patterns are mastered, paragraph writing is introduced along with the concepts of topic sentence, supporting sentences, and concluding sentance. It is also important to explain continuity and sequential development necessary for good paragraph writing. Gerald Dykstra and Christina Bratt Paulston (1972), proponents of the guided composition technique, advocate the gradual manipulation of model passages in order to achieve the ultimate goal of free composition. Controlled exercises give practice in correct forms, enabling the students to express themselves clearly and accurately. Students do not have to wait until they have gone through all the controlled exercised to engage in free composition. It should be a gradual process so that students can develop independence in writing and not always rely on the teacher for guidance.

To encourage free composition, Peter Elbow (1973) suggested the technique of free writing. The student writes continuously on a topic for a period of ten minutes without stopping. The purpose is to write without worrying about spelling, punctuation, or editing. The sentences, phrases, or ideas obtained during the free period can be expanded into compositions. A 5x8 index card is recommended for students who are intimidated by a blank sheet of paper.

Correction of student errors should not be neglected while teaching students how to write compositions. Devise a consistent system to praise student ideas and at the same time to alert them to areas that need improvement. This can be done in a variety of ways. Some teachers select particular kinds of grammatical errors and correct only those errors during a specific lesson. Donald Knapp (cited in Allen and Campbell, 1972) advocates the use of a checklist to indicate areas of strength and weakness. Marginal comments, individual conferences, and peer analysis also are used. The specific system is not important, as long as students understand that it is constructive criticism and use the information to revise and rewrite their compositions if necessary.

Evaluation Procedures In an article concerned with teaching language arts to Vietnamese children it is appropiate to give some consideration to the topic of evaluation, because this is an important component of the teaching process. The different types of tests often used for this are placement tests, diagnostic tests, mastery tests, and standardized achievement tests.

Placement tests are used to help determine the student's previous language and educational experience for placement in an appropriate learning level. Diagnostic tests aid in pinpointing specific strengths and weaknesses. Teacher-made mastery tests permit the teacher to ascertain the student's mastery level of the material taught. Standardized achievement tests are employed to measure acheivement with more advanced students in later stages of the language learning program.

There are two basic approaches for testing general language proficiency (English Language Testing, 1979). One approach, the discrete point test, assumes that language is made up of identifiable discrete elements which can be isolated and measured. Discrete-point tests evaluate one element at a time (e.g. English structure, vocabulary items, etc.), and are usually comprised of multiple-choice, matching, fill in the blank, and true-false questions. These tests are easily scored and provide specific information for the teacher.

The second approach is based upon the premise that communication is a global ability and that language proficiency cannot be measured in separate segments. Therefore, proponents of this approach devise tests which require obtaining free responses from students to assess overall language proficiency. One test is the scored interview. The student carries on a conversation about a variety of topics with a speaker who is going to assess him/her. The scored interview is often used for placement purposes or to judge general language mastery. It requires time to administer and sometimes special training to score and interpret. The primary advantage of these "structured oral interviews" is that they provide direct information about the language skills that are most relevant for teachers. However, these tests are not recommended for students operating on a minimal language level.

To find more specific information about the various types of tests mentioned, the reader is referred to the Indochinese Refugee Education Guide - English Language Language Testing published by the Center for Applied Linguistics.

The "cloze" procedure, mentioned earlier in this article, can be used for evaluation as well as for instruction with more advanced students (Paulston and Bruder, 1976).

Scoring initial cloze tests for limited English speaking students deviates slightly from general scoring procedures; any answer which is grammatically correct and makes sense in the sentence is scored as correct. Later, only exact answers may be counted as correct, if comprehension os specific passages is being checked. The number of correct responses out of the total number of responses is used to calculate the percentage of correct answers. These percentages are compared against the following table values:

Percent of Correct Answers	Reading Level
Above 53%	Independent or Recreational Reading level
Between 44% - 53%	Instructional Reading Level
Below 44%	Frustrational Reading Level

Cloze tests provide quick indication of the student's ability to cope with various levels of the English language. They are relatively easy to construct, administer, and score.

Tests that accompany second language text material and other commercial tests can be used if applicable. It will still be necessary however, for classroom teachers to devise alternative testing stragetics observing the following principles (Harris, 1969):

1. Test the objectives of the lesson/s.
2. Test all language skills: listening, speaking, reading, and writing.
3. Use the tests for diagnostic purposes.
4. Try to test in context.
5. Decide on the type of test you want to administer (e.g. multiple choice, etc.).
6. Begin the test with easier items and build up to more difficult ones.
7. Correct tests in a manner which provides constructive feedback for students.
8. If possible, test individually or in small groups.

Tests of English language proficiency are important adjuncts to any second language program. They aid in placement, provide insights into the student's strengths and weaknesses, and dictate the future direction of the second language program.

Summary

Teaching Vietnamese children requires no mystical or magical powers. And, as Gonzales (1981) has noted, it does not require the purchase of unusual materials. The recognized principles of ESL instruction form the cornerstones of the language arts program. The teaching process develops its form through increased understanding of Vietnamese culture, needs identification, realistic and well-planned goals and objectives, a variety of appropriate techniques and related activities, and evaluation procedures which measure the areas taught. Fears and frustrations felt by every teacher who encounters limited or non-English speaking students are no less felt by the child. However, fears can be overcome by compassionate understanding frustrations alleviated by patience. The best teachers may find the experience of teaching Vietnamese children quite difficult. But through the willingness to learn and develop a solid foundation in ESL principles, s/he will realize the finest reward of teaching, when the child says:

"Cam ơn ông dã giúp tôi."
"Thank you for helping me."

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Part III

UTILIZING EVERY RESOURCE

Educators have learned that because every child is unique there is a tremendous range and variety of achievements among the individuals in any classroom. This uniqueness makes human interaction interesting and is an asset to a democratic society. Research has proven the value of a number of instructional techniques for advancing the learning and the unique capabilities of individual pupils. And skillful teachers use their knowledge of the science and the art of teaching to challenge and stimulate everyone. However, even the most scientific teacher needs to expand upon his or her knowledge of new procedures for maximizing learning. And even the most artistic teacher needs assistance from other professionals within the school and from nonprofessionals outside the school. Part III of this volume directs attention to some of the special procedures and resources that are available.

Mainstreaming is a procedure that spotlights special differences by placing most gifted and handicapped children in regular classrooms for a part of each school day. Some schools always have done this, and U. S. Public Law 94-142 now requries that all students be taught "in the least restrictive environment" that can be provided. Teachers need to learn not to be alarmed about the mainstreamed child who spends part of the day in the regular classroom. Provision for this child's special needs is only one more facet of the planning for the full range of individual differences. The child probably will work comfortably with some small group in the room and will add a new demension of interest for his peers.

Today gifted children are receiving renewed attention. When they are mainstreamed, they add to the variety in a calss and become resources as group contributors and leaders. The teacher needs to learn what types of objectives and activities are appropriate to stimulate them to work at the higher conceptual levels while they participate in appropriate portions of the class and group communications projects.

Because a social service almost never is adequately funded, schools always are staffed inadequately to perform all of the tasks that they aim to carry out. Parents can work with teachers in providing valuable education experiences at home, and sometimes they can do volunteer work of great value in the school. There is an old cliche about "parents as partners," and like most cliches, it states a basic fact. Educators need to learn to utilize parental resources much more effectively than they usually have in the past.

Section III focuses on selected strategies that provide for the full range of individual differences by utilizing the specialized knowledge, the auxiliary personnel of the school and the special competencies of all the parents in support of every teacher.

WHAT WE KNOW ABOUT MAINSTREAMING FROM EXPERIENCE*

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In 1975 when The Education for All Handicapped Children Act (Public Law 94-142) was signed, most students who had been identified as handicapped and in need of special services were being taught in segregated special education facilities. The Congressional mandate that schools provide all handicapped children and youth with services in the least restrictive environment required a major restructuring of educational systems so that large numbers of handicapped children and youth could be integrated or reintegrated into the mainstream of public education. This process, which is known as mainstreaming, reduces the separation of handicapped and nonhandicapped students in educational settings and increases their opportunities for physical proximity, shared experiences, and social or cognitive interaction.

There are discussed in this chapter four forms of mainstreaming: physical, recreational, social, and instructional. Each is appropriate at different times for different times for different handicapped children and youth as a method of bringing all handicapped students closer to the ultimate goal of total integration.

Physical mainstreaming occurs when a special class is moved from a church basement or segregated day school into an age-appropriate, public, regular school building. Although the educational programs for the handicapped children in this class may still be self-contained, the physical presence of the children in the regular school constitutes a minimal level of mainstreaming.

Recreational mainstreaming occurs when handicapped and nonhandicapped children share the same physical facilities and eat lunch in the same lunch room at the same time, play (however separately) in the same play yard at noon or recess, cheer the same basketball team, and enjoy the same school assemblies.

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* Reprinted from Percy Bates (Ed.), Mainstreaming: Our current knowledge base. A publication of the National Support Systems Project, in press.

Social mainstreaming takes place when handicapped students are integrated into the social system of the school and they develop friendships with their nonhandicapped peers. This form of mainstreaming is harder to accomplish than physical or recreational mainstreaming; the latter two expose handicapped and nonhandicapped students to proximity but not necessarily interaction in the same physical environment. Social mainstreaming occurs when handicapped students are able to interact socially with nonhandicapped peers and regular education teachers. Although these interactions may be difficult to establish, they are not impossible. For example, Reynolds and Birch (1977) reported instances of successful social mainstreaming.

Instructional mainstreaming brings handicapped students into the instructional environment of the regular classroom with their nonhandicapped peers. Students sit in the same classroom and receive instruction from the same teachers, which is delivered in a manner to permit both handicapped and nonhandicapped students to benefit from that instruction.

Of the four types of integration, instructional mainstreaming is the most difficult to conduct successfully. It requires fundamental changes in the orientation of schools. It means heterogeneous and not homegeneous classroom groupings. It means inclusion rather than exculsion. It means that regular teachers essentially will have no choice in the make up of their classes. There are numerous examples of instructional mainstreaming in which children with various handicapping conditions are integrated in the various levels of schooling (Birch, 1978). The problems of successfully carrying out instructional mainstreaming are the focus of this chapter.

The two authors acquired experience with instructional mainstreaming when they began working closely with the Pittsburgh Public Schools in 1975 to develop a comprehensive secondary school program for students with learning disabilities. The program provides a minimum of pull-out services to learning disabled students (one period per day), and retains these students in regular high school content area subjects for the remainder of their school time. (For a complete description of this program, see Zigmond, 1978.) The authors have trained special education teachers to serve as consultants and resource personnel to regular high school teachers and, thereby, to facilitate the instructional integration and reintegration of learning disabled students into high school subject area classes.

Experiences with this program at other levels have helped the authors to identify the reasons that attempts at instructional integration often are ineffective; confirmation has been provided by personnel who work in both elementary and secondary schools. In this chapter, some of the constraints or instructional mainstreaming are discussed and changes in the educational system to facilitate instructional integration are proposed. If instructional mainstreaming is to work there must be change. Granted that change is a slow evolutionary process and does not occur in institutions like schools by simple fiat, the prospects for change can be enhanced by careful analysis of the status quo and of the constraints.

Factors in Instructional Integration

The four factors that seem to affect the success of instructional integration are (a) parental support, (b) preparation of students, (c) accommodative power of regular education, and (d) organization of teacher education and service delivery systems. If instructional mainstreaming is to be implemented on a large scale, as it must be, then consideration must be given to these four factors and to the way in which they influence (and, in turn, are influenced by) the day-to-day realities of the schools. Each factor is examined here, current constraints to mainstreaming are discussed, and some of the changes which must take place are identified if the needs of all handicapped and nonhandicapped students are to be met adequately, the needs of teachers in both regular and special education to be considered and appreciated, and the intent of Public Law 94-142 is to be fulfilled.

PARENTAL SUPPORT

Parents of Nonhandicapped Students

Many parents of both nonhandicapped and handicapped students are not enthusiastic about instructional mainstreaming. Parents of nonhandicapped students are concerned that their children's educational will be compromised. They fear that their children will be given less attention if teachers are busy attending to the needs of the handicapped children. They are concerned that the presence of handicapped students in classrooms will lower the general level and quality of the educational environment. Sometimes they worry that handicapped students may frighten their children. They even may fear that somehow disabilities are contagious.

These parental concerns are **understandable.** The school experiences of most of today's parents did not include interactions with handicapped persons. Their current life experiences probable do not, either. This lack of exposure to the personalities and capabilities of handicapped persons contributed to a general skepticism about the values of mainstreaming and makes parents fearful and resentful.

We need large-scale programs to educate the parents on nonhandicapped students. Popular literature and commercial and educational radio and television offer the means for a public relations campaign on mainstreaming. Parents must learn why heterogeneous groupings of students in schools are preferred; why honhandicapped children have much to learn from exposure to handicapped peers; and why mainstreaming is the appropriate method to serve all students. School systems must find vehicles for communicating to parents the nature of handicapping conditions and for allaying their fears (which are transmitted to children) of enteraction with handicapped persons. A series of parent education workshops can be used to explain whay may be expected when a handicapped child is introduced into a regular classroom. Parents also need to explore ways to include handicapped students in their own children's out-of-school social experiences (e.g., how to include a handicapped child in a birthday party or scout troop). The support of parents of nonhandicapped students is critical. Without it school personnel are reluctant to press for more than minimal compliance with the provisions of Public Law 94-142 and, thus, mainstreaming is not successfully accomplished.

Some parents of handicapped students express considerable ambivalence about instructional mainstreaming. On the one hand, some welcome the opportunity for their children to return to the mainstream, and are eager for a mix of both special and regular education services. On the other hand, some regard the mainstreaming mandate with considerable skepticism and even fear. Many retarded separate special education programs as sheltered, nonthreatening, nonstigmatizing educational experiences for their handicapped youngsters. They viewed special education teachers as sensitive, caring professionals with the time, resources, training, and commitment to attend the special needs of their children. Many worked hard to have their children placed in these special segregated educational programs. These same parents now fear that mainstreaming means that their children will be stigmatized, that they will experience rejection by and ridicule from regular teachers and nonhandicapped peers. They worry that handicapped students will not get so much teacher attention and teacher time as they received in the special classrooms. They are concerned that regular education teachers will not be so caring and committed to handicapped children as special education teachers were. They worry that their children will be unsuccessful in the mainstream. Remembering the elaborate identification and diagnostic procedures that uncovered the special needs of their handicapped children, they do not understand how individualized program planning conferences can result in recommendations for their handicapped children to participate in the very settings in which they had difficulty in the first place. They are disappointed because the mainstreaming placement seems as if nothing "special" is being given to children who have been recognized as having special needs.

These parents of handicapped children need to be re-educated about the appropriateness of least restrictive environments. They need to be shown how any necessary special services can be delivered in the context of a mainstreaming program. Their advocacy activities need to be redirected away from attempts to insure special programming for handicapped children and toward efforts to improve the general quality of education for all children. Because their fears are real and founded in experience, they need to be convinced that mainstreaming can improve and increase the educational opportunities which are available to their handicapped children.

School administrators, school board members, superintendents, directors of special education, and principals are responsive to parental pressures. School programs reflect the attitudes and wishes of the comminity. Parents of both handicapped and nonhandicapped children must join in support and advocacy groups to make mainstreaming a reality. Until a majority of these parents overcome their fears of the mainstreaming mandate of Public Law 94-142, the support and pressure needed for change to take place in the schools will not be forthcoming.

PREPARATION OF STUDENTS

A significant factor in the failure of many mainstreaming attempts is the inadequate preparation of both handicapped and nonhandicapped students for the integration process. Regular education students are often very uncomfortable in the presence of handicapped studetns. A short lecture or brief simulation does little to relieve feelings which derive from fear of the unknown. In turn, some handicapped students have not had the experiences that would equip them to meet the demands of a mainstream environment. Even those who have been partially mainstreamed may not be prepared academically, socially, or psychologically for instructional integration. The curricula of both regular and special calsses should be revamped to give adequate attention to the knowledge and skills needed by both sets of students to facilitate mainstreaming.

Needs of Nonhandicapped Students

Regular education students need information about handicapping conditions in order to develop some insight and understanding of their handicapped peers. Even more important, they need help to develop positive attitudes toward individual differences of all kinds. They must learn to look beyond physical attractiveness, academic success, or athletic ability for other indicators of a person's value and contribution. Their help is essential to make the mainstream environment one that fosters acceptance and support rather than competition and rejection.

Needs of Handicapped Students

Academic Needs. Handicapped students also need to learn to accept differences. They need to master an array of academic, social, and psychological skills that will enable them to cope with the integrated environment. To teach them the necessary academic skills to handle the content and requirements of the mainstream classroom, there must be personnel in each school whose primary responsibility is to provide direct instruction to handicapped students in basic reading, listening, speaking, writing, and calculating skills. Such personnel are especially important for students who are beyond the primary grade level and may not get explicit instruction in basic academic skills in the context of a mainstream curriculum. The goal of direct academic instruction is literacy, that is, the foundation in basic skills that lead to graduation from high school, future employment, and life adjustment.

Nonacademic Needs: "School Survival Skills." Handicapped students need specific training in how to cope with the instructional environment as it is structured in the mainstream. They need to learn how to function in larger, less individualized settings, which mainstream classrooms tend to be. In effect, they need to develop school survival skills, for example, how to listen, follow directions, take notes, do homework, organize time, use textbooks, work independently, work with others, and wait for teacher direction. In sheltered special education school experiences, handicapped students may not have had specific training or practice in coming to class on time, having a pencil at hand, staying out of fights, or using body language that indicates a positive attitude toward learning. These behaviors are as essential for survival in the mainstream instructional setting as knowing how to read. To a large degree they influence teachers' attituded toward students and thereby increase or decrease a student's chance of success in the mainstream. Many nonhandicapped students perform these behaviors intuitively; handicapped students, however, may need very explicit instruction in these survival skills. In preparing students for mainstreaming, the special educator must identify the behaviors that are appropriate for the regular classroom, playground, locker room, and even bathroom. Then, instruction in these "survival skills" must become part of the reintegration process.

Such instruction should be systematic and explicit. Teaching must begin with helping students to develop awareness of their current behaviors. Students need to develop awareness of their current behaviors. Students need instruction in how to identify which of their behaviors are appropriate. They need to see that there are consequences to all behaviors and that they have some control over these consequences by selecting more acceptable behaviors, they need to practice them, first in the more sheltered special education context and then in the mainstream environment.

School survival skills training should be incorporated into the curriculum of both special education and regular education. Many students are referred for special services primarily because they lack these school survival skills and are disruptive in mainstream classrooms. A successful school survival skills curriculum for students in the mainstream can reduce the referral rate to special education. Furthermore, when handicapped students spend less time in special education environments and greater emphasis is given there to basic skill instruction, the mainstream curricula may have to absorb this component of handicapped students' instructional needs.

Psychological Needs. Handicapped students need to be prepared psychologically to participate in the mainstream. For the student who has been in a rigorously programmed special education environment in which task difficulty and delivery of reinforcements have been carefully controlled to insure motivation and success, the mainstream may be a disturbing experience. Such students may need to be taught how to deal with failure, criticism and ridicule.

Handicapped students are likely to be anxious and fearful about reintegration and they must be helped to deal with these feelings. They can be taught how to be their own advocates, how to recognize their own strengths and limitations, and how to explain to others just what their capabilities are. They also can learn what resources are available to them in the schools, and where to go for help when it is needed.

The adequate preparation of students for mainstreaming may take a long time. It requires teachers to build a series of specific instructional sequences into both regular and special education curricula. But it is an essential ingredient for successful mainstreaming and it should be given far more attention than it currently receives.

ACCOMMODATIVE POWER OF REGULAR EDUCATION

No factor is more critical to instructional mainstreaming than the extent to which regular education is able to accommodate individual differences. Many traditional approaches to day-to-day operations in school seriously constrain current attempts at mainstreaming.

Homogeneous Grouping

Grade retention and grade acceleration polocies, as well as pullout programs for retarded, handicapped, unruly, or poorly motivated pupils have been supported by most teachers. They assumed that such policies helped to make their classrooms more homogeneous in achievement and their teaching jobs a little more manageable. Yet, even under these conditions, teachers report that their classes reflect very wide ranges of abilities. Furthermore, they contend that they are required to teach too many children, that they rarely have access to aides, that they have a narrow selection of materials, and that with so many demands already placed on their time they cannot be expected to do even more.

There is also a strong commitment among school personnel to finding the "one best way" to teach all children. In many classrooms, all students sit at desks, all desks are in rows, all students are presented with the same lesson and they use the same materials, and they do the same assignments usually within the same assignments usually within the same time period. At a given time, all students take the same test and, regardless of performance, they all proceed to the next unit of study. Even in open classrooms where all students may operate on a weekly contract and be required to work independent of teacher direction, individual differences in learning capacity and learning style are often ignored. When individualized instruction is attempted, only pacing is manipulated; students are still expected to complete the same assignment in the same manner, although different students may be on different pages of the same book.

Reliance on Specialists

Teachers have also been encouraged to rely on specialists to solve the academic, social, or psychological problems which children have in schools. Given the availability of specialists, teachers have felt comfortable identifying students they thought required "special" instruction and sending these students to other classrooms. This practice is, of course, at variance with the ideals and goals of instructional mainstreaming.

Attitudes of Regular Education Teachers

Many teachers are reluctant to set aside traditional approaches and begin to accommodate handicapped students in their classrooms. They regard the mainstream mandates with considerable apprehension. They fear that special education students may be disruptive; they are uncomfortable in the presence of a handicapped child; and they feel inadequate at not having the specialized skills to teach handicapped children. Clearly, the traditions, attitudes, and skills of regular teachers must be dealt with in any attempt to maximize the opportunities for all students to learn in the regular education environment.

Inservice: A Vehicle for Change

Inservice education is one vehicle for bringing about needed changes. Workshops can be designed to help teachers to confront their anxieties about the introduction of handicapped students into regular classrooms. Factual information about handicapping conditions dispels myths and fears and replaces old stereotypes with realistic expectations for handicapped students.

Inservice education can introduce regular educators to the specific skills they need to deal more effectively with a wider range of individual differences in the regular classroom. By emphasizing that there is no "one best way" to teach all children, it can introduce teachers to the notion that variable practices are preferred over uniform practices, and that by using various approaches teachers are likely to reach more of their students, whether handicapped or not. Inservice education workshops can be opportunities to convince teachers that when they begin to modify instructional procedures to accommodate the individual needs of the handicapped students, the education of all children will improve.

Changes in Roles

The heavy reliance on educational "specialists" who remove handicapped children from regular classes must be discouraged. The emphasis on "child-find" activities sets up the expectation by teachers and parents that any special children who are found will be given special treatment in special environments. This expectation is contrary to the goal of instructional mainstreaming. Instead, we should foster the expectation that all children have special instructional needs and that teaching to accommodate a wide range of individual differences will benefit all students. "Special students" need not be labeled, segregated, and taught exclusively by specialists because remediation or accelerated instruction can be provided in the context of the regular classroom, with the help of specialists. Regular classroom teachers must accept a new responsibility for the education of handicapped students. Special education teachers also must accept new responsibilities. In many universities across the country, special educators are being prepared to serve in indirect service roles, that is, as resource personnel, inservice trainers, and consulting teachers. Their new function in schools is to help regular classroom teachers to develop and carry out the instructional alternatives which are required to educate handicapped children in regular classrooms. More such training programs will be needed in the future.

All efforts must be directed toward making the mainstream of education a place where no child feels unwelcome and where a teacher can call upon a variety of support services to assist him or her in providing an appropriate education to each child in the regular classroom.

ORGANIZATION OF TEACHER EDUCATION AND SERVICE DELIVERY STYSTEMS

Background

Public Law 94-142 has created a new set of conditions in the public schools which must be addressed by teacher education. With no changes in teacher training, certification, class size, or resource allocation, the regular classroom has been designated as the least restrictive environment for handicapped students. Neither special nor regular educators can reconcile past beliefs and practices with the current mandate, and the result is confusion and hostility.

Typically, regular educators and special educators have viewed each other in terms of their differences, for example, differences in whom they teach, how many students they teach, what they teach, and, most significant, how they teach. This emphasis on differences is given credibilty by the schools: They establish differences in the duties, class size, materials, resources, and sometimes even salary scales for regular and special educators. There are also differences in training, credentials, and professional affiliations. Historically, special educators have justified these differences by emplasizing the specificity of handicapped children's needs. Mainstream educators have accepted the arguments that they are ill-prepared to teach retarded, disturbed, learning disabled, or physically handicapped students; that each category of students needs a specially trained teacher; that these students are particularly difficult to teach; and that the teachers who instruct these students need small class size and more material resources. Regular educators met their responsibilities to these students by automatic referals to special education.

The difficulties created by the traditional separation of preservice training for regular and special educators, and of service delivery systems for nonhandicapped and handicapped pupils must be delt with. They are very serious constraints to instructional mainstreaming.

Needs of Regular Educators

Attempts to implement the law have revealed in practice what was evident to many in advance: The preparation of regular education teachers simply was not adequate for the newly created conditions. School personnel in general have not had the kind of preparation that is necessary for dealing with the full range of differences among the populations of children in regular school settings. It was for this reason, at least in part, that special classes for handicapped children proliferated in the place.

Prospective teachers of regular classes must learn about their new responsibilities and about the social and legal traditions from which these new responsibilities arise. These teachers essentially have no choice but to work with handicapped children, and training programs can and must play a major role in helping them to develop a positive attitude toward integration and mainstreaming. Teachers also must learn their role in "child-find" activities. They must understand the procedures for and consequences of identifying a handicapped child, and be aware of school and community resources available to help them retain such a child in the least restrictive envirinment. Most current literature and college coursed overemphasize the role of specialists in educating handicapped students; they do not provide regular education teachers with adequate orientation or sensitivity to their role in the education of children with handicaps.

Regular teachers need preparation in the proper and efficient use of consultants. They also need more preparation to work with parents. The new mandate has placed parents of handicapped children in an advocacy role. Public Law 94-142 requires the participation of a handicapped student's parents at each step of identification, evaluation, placement in an appropriate setting, and educational planning. How these new parent-teacher relationships are developed is critical to the success of the least restrictive environment.

Regular classroom teachers need to know how to make educational assessments and to specify goals and objectives in clear terms. Public Law 94-142 mandates the development of individualized educational program plans, continuous progress report systems, and diagnostic profiles of strengths and weaknesses for each exceptional student. Regular education teachers need preparation in how to comply with these mandates.

In fact, to make mainstreaming work, regular education teachers need to know just about everything special education teachers of mildly handicapped youngsters need to know. One may even conclude that the distinction in preservice training programs between special and regular educators is no longer a reasonable or viable appoach to the preparation of teachers. Future training programs may eliminate the distinctions in certification requirements for special education teachers of the mildly handicapped and teachers of nonhandicapped children. Training programs can be designed to prepare all teachers to teach all children and to feel that all children are their responsibility.

New Preservice Training Programs for Regular and Special Education Teachers

In the new training programs, teachers may learn to teach a specific subject to all kinds of students. The concept of the generalist who is prepared to teach a self-contained classroom in an elementary school may have to be abandoned. In its place will come the subject-matter specialist. Elementary reading teachers would be prepared to teach all kinds of students as would elemantary mathematics teachers and social studies or science teachers. In secondary programs, teacher trainees would retain the subject-matter emphasis, but they would be taught techniques for reaching a wider range of individual students. These new training programs would embrace the idea that teachers may choose the content they will learn how to teach but not the kind of child they will teach.

Such an approach would eliminate the need for certain special education certificates, particularly those for teachers of the mildly handicapped. There still would be sufficient reason to retain special certification for teachers of the sensory impaired or the severely and profoundly handicapped, because mainstreaming for these students may best be limited to physical and recreational mainstreaming.

One result of training programs which are reorganized along these lines would be increased communication among teachers and a new commitment by all teachers all the time, regardless of who happens to be delivering services at a given moment.

Change in Service Delivery

When teachers are better prepared to make instructional mainstreaming a reality, important changes will have to take place in the way school systems deliver services to handicapped children. Instructional mainstreaming does not mean the end of special education services for handicapped students, but thev will be delivered in less restrictive settings, and new services to support mainstream teachers will be introduced.

The direct services might be provided in the regular classroom or a resource room to which a student is alligned for one period a day (the traditional practice). The direct special instruction will focus on the academic, social, and psychological skills handicapped children need to manage in the mainstream environment.

A teacher consultant working with mainstream teachers and other school personnel would be introduced as an additional indirect service to handicapped students'. The teacher consultant would serve as a liaison between mainstream and special education teachers, facilitating the preparation of both handicapped students and mainstream teachers for reintegration. The teacher consultant would share information, ideas and, where possible, even supplies, materials, and other resources which are formally earmarked for special education teacher use only. The teacher consultant would work closely with the mainstream teacher in team teaching, in developing alternative teaching materials, and in solving instructional problems as they arise. The teacher consultant would help mainstream teachers to modify their teaching environmemt to accommodate more successfully the varying needs of all students in their class.

We view the teacher consultant position as critical to the initiation and maintenance of instructional integration. It is an essential--not optional--component in the reorganization of the service delivery system that will make mainstreaming work. In sum, for instructional mainstreaming to work, we must change the preparation of teachers. New inservice programs must ensure that teachers not only have the skills they need to teach effectively but, also, a feeling of responsibility for all children. Service delivery systems also much change. Direct services to handicapped students will continue to be important, but, in addition, personnel who can support teachers in their efforts to accommodate problem children must be introduced into schools. Only then can we truly achieve the instructional integration of handicapped students.

Conclusions

It is clear to us that in most school districts the regular classroom is currently not the least restrictive educational environment for handicapped children. Neither the instructional practices nor the social climate permit the instructional integration of handicapped students. We understand that change comes slowly to schools, that teacher behaviors change in very small steps and that for these changes to occur teachers must have guided instruction, consultation, and ongoing support. We remember that the time frame for instructional mainstreaming is much greater than the time frame for physical or recreational mainstreaming; and that the first student to be mainstreamed in a particular teacher's class may not benefit as much as will future students. We have tried to be realistic in our goals and expectations for instructional mainstreaming, but we are concerned that so much still needs to be done.

Research Needs

Despite the fact that successful mainstreaming will depend in large part on the ability of the educational environment to accommodate all children in all curricular areas, there has been to date no rigorous attempt to identify which teaching practices enhance instruction of handicapped learners in regular classrooms. At the Learning Research and Development Center, University of Pittsburgh, we are undertaking such a study. Over the next few years we will examine the specific features of mainstream classrooms, including the classroom processes, teacher practices, and student behaviors that contribute to successful mainstreaming. We may guess that successful mainstreaming will take place in a classroom in which the teacher provides alternative ways for students to receive information, practice skills, and demonstrate knowledge; in which there are alternative organization and management strategies in operation; and in which grading procedures take into consideration individual learning styles and learning rates. Our research will attempt to move us past the guessing stage to identify effective practices for instructional mainstreaming. More research of this kind is sorely needed.

Research is also needed on the range of individual differences that realistically can be accommodated in one classroom without jeopardizing the educational experiences for handicapped students or for those who are not. We need to explore whether changes in teacher-pupil ratios are necessary for accommodating handicapped learners in regular classrooms.

We strongly believe that the regular classroom is the place in which handicapped students should receive the major portion of their education. However, unless we find out what changes to make and how to make them, attempts at mainstreaming are bound to fail and compliance with Public Law 94-142 will not benefit handicapped children.

Mainstreaming is here to stay. It is not only the law of the land, but it is a morally and socially appropriate course of action. To make it work may take considerable effort, but we had better be up to the task. Millions of children and their parents are counting on us.

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THE GIFTED CHILD AND THE COMPOSING PROCESS

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This paper offers a description of several key characteristics found among gifted children. Also included is a discussion of how knowledge of these characteristics can help to develop strategies that can be applied in the classroom. Finally, strategies are presented that are designed to motivate gifted children to write successfully.

Teachers of gifted children generally cite three characteristic factors that they believe contribute to success in learning: 1) the ability to think critically and solve problems in a systematic way, 2) the sensitivity or awareness of even the most subtle elements of their environment and 3) the tendency to think in unique and flexible ways.

Critical Thinking

Children who are gifted display characteristics that help us to discern that their mental operations are unique. They excel in the area of critical thinking which allows them to approach problem-solving in a logical and systematic manner. They have the ability to perform higher level thinking tasks as defined by Bloom (1956) application, analysis, synthesis and evaluation. In addition, they are able to complete tasks requiring divergent thinking skills as outlined in Guilford's Structure of the Intellect model. These skills permit them to perceive relationships in seemingly unlike objects and situations. Organization of thought, among gifted children, is also reflected in their ability to offer evidence which clarifies and supports an opinion or position relative to an issue. The ability to discriminate, make valid decisions, organize, plan and discern fact from opinion are behaviors that characterize them as independent learners.

Sensory Perception

As the gifted child interacts with the environment, he/she manifests a sensitivity to and an awareness of the physical, social and emotional conditions of the surroundings. This is possible because of a keen sense of observation which stems from a highly developed sensory perception (sight, hearing, touch, smell, taste). An enriched vocabulary provides the avenue for effective written expression, thus allowing the gifted child to capture and share the essense of his/her environment.

Uniqueness of Thought

There are many times when gifted children prefer to create their own sense of environment. This need to be creative and original is fostered by their flexible thought patterns, by their fluency of ideas and by their ability to extend and expand upon an idea. Hence, the powers of imagination, in the gifted child, seem unlimited. This ability allows them to interject the unconventional into what generally would be considered a traditional or conventional situation.

Strategies That Motivate The Gifted Child To Write

Given all of their strengths in sophisticated thought processes, many gifted children are still hesitant to express their ideas in writing. For this reason, a writing program for the gifted child should be carefully structured so that it addresses the specific strengths and skills as outlined in this paper.

Key ability areas which have been discussed are critical thinking, sensory perception and originality of thought. Exhibits 1, 2, and 3 offer samples of instructional objectives and writing activities designed to encourage enrichment writing experiences for the gifted.

While it is appropriate to consider the thinking ability of the gifted child in structuring a writing program, it is equally important to recognize the need to adequately prepare him/her for the act of writing. First, the child must recognize that there are three distinct stages in the composition process: prewriting, writing and rewriting (Koch and Brazil, 1978). The primary stress in this article is given to the prewriting stage, the most neglected of the three stages (Rothman, 1965). Current texts and teaching sadly neglect the discovery or prewriting stage (Harrington, 1968). Because of the gifted child's academic aptitude, all too often, teachers leave the prewriting stage to inspiration and trial and error (Flower, 1978).

Flower (1978) outlines strategies that generate a flow of ideas which are essential for the full development of the critical prewriting stage. Given their unique thinking skills, gifted children can readily utilize the following strategies as patterns when approaching a writing assignment:

- Brainstorming - randomly jotting down thoughts;
- Using WIRMI - a talk strategy for generating a clear and concise statement of a point of view. The student simply says to himself, What I Really Mean Is...;
- Using Notation Techniques - jotting down sentences and ideas so that students can work with them visually, not just in their heads;
- Satisficing - taking the first acceptable solution or alternative, during the first draft of a writing, instead of searching the perfect word or phrase (Flower, 1978, p. 35).

The key aspects of the prewriting stage are exploration and discovery. Gifted children are capable of seeing a myriad of possibilities in a seemingly one-dimensional situation. This premise is reflected in the "particle, wave and field theory," delineated by Young, Becker and Pike (1970). Their model forces the analysis of a situation or object from various perspectives. The "particle" stage requires reviewing an object in its static state (e.g., contrasting an oak tree with surrounding trees in terms of size and shape). The "wave" stage requires a description of the object in a changing state (e.g., noticing a tree shedding its leaves more slowly than the other trees). The "field" stage requires the ability to identify the sub-parts and to recognize the interdependence of the complex whole (e.g., recognizing that a tree is composed of roots, trunk, branches, leaves, and a reproductive system) (Young, Becker, Pike, 1970).

If a gifted child is trained to apply each stage of this model to a situation, new and previously unexplored insights emerge; thus generating a reservoir of possible ideas for beginning a writing assignment.

Taking The Apprehension Out of Writing

"A Difficult Poem"

I don't know what to write,

I don't know what to say,

This poem may take me all night,

Not to mention taking all day!

My back aches from sitting
so long,

My hand hurts from clenching
the pen,

I don't understand what is wrong
When will I be finished? Oh, When?

by Wendy Wiener
Grade 7 -- Gifted
Pittsburgh Public Schools
Kathleen Thompson, Teacher

Many students suffer such pangs of anxiety when they are required to write. How do we take apprehension out of the writing process? Some recommendations follow:

- Address the specific thinking abilities of the gifted by writing compatible objectives and activities.
- Lessen insecurities by offering guidance, in the form of conferencing, to assist with the three stages of the composing process.
- Structure the prewriting stage by including various methods which serve to generate the foundation for the writing stage.
- Give positive feedback throughout all three stages of writing in order to encourage a willingness to write.
- Allow students to initiate writing topics rather than respond only to teacher-directed suggestions.

EXHIBITS

EXHIBIT 1

CRITICAL THINKING

Specific Skill Areas	Objective	Writing Activity
Ability to:		
. make valid decisions . problem-solve using a logical and systematic approach . perform higher level thinking tasks (application, analysis, synthesis, evaluation) . descern fact from opinion . organize and plan independently . interpret information	1.0 Student will be able to use supportive evidence in the development of a written product.	1.1 Write a short paper that supports your opinion on a topic of your choice. 1.2 Compare or contrast the theme, or structure of two movies, speeches, or works of literatire with which you are familiar.

SENSORY PERCEPTION

Specific Skill Areas	Objective	Writing Activity
The Student:		
. is sensitive to his physical, social and emotional surroundings . has a keen sense of observation (taste, smell, sight, touch, hearing) . uses an enriched vocabulary to add color, emotion and charm to communications	1.0 The student will be able to write about personal experiences in terms of all the senses.	1.1 After identifying or creating sensory analogies (e.g., visual: a ruffled skirt and leaf lettuce; hearing: a human voice and a fog horn; touch: a jelly fish and okra; sandpaper and an unshaven face), write a describtive paragraph explaining their similarities. 1.2 Describe the mood which is captured in a photograph, scene or situation.

EXHIBIT 2

ORIGINALITY OF THOUGHT

Specific Skill Areas	Objective	Writing Activity
The Student:		
. prefers to create his own sense of environment . has flexible thought patterns . has fluency of ideas . can create order and new ideas from old situations	1.0 Students will demonstrate the ability to use the imagination to construct non-traditional perspectives in the writing process.	1.1 Write a descriptive paper which personifies an inanimate object, giving it human qualities such as emotions, spirituality and physical traits. 1.2 Select a topic or theme and develop it in different writing forms (e.g., poetry, essay, short story, etc.)

EXHIBIT 3

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CHILDREN'S SPECIAL NEEDS: PARENTS AND TEACHERS IN TOUCH AND IN TUNE

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Astute observers of the human condition down through the ages have touted uniqueness of the individual. Parents and teachers today are no different in their assessments. Even though most children evidence characteristics common to others of their ages or developmental stages, parents and teachers agree that each child possesses unique strengths, needs and goals.

In order for any child to get the most out of educational experiences, parents and teachers must communicate. The term communication implies, in this instance, the exchange of information or messages concerning the developmental progress and ways of meeting the special needs of each learner. Communication must be reciprocal and founded upon a mutual agreement to do an excellent job of helping children learn.

When one considers the role aspects of teaching and parenting, an overlapping which should facilitate productive communication becomes apparent. The teacher acts 'in loco parentis' during every school day, and few parents would deny the teaching dimensions of relating to their children. However, recent history has revealed several issues which prevent many parents and teachers from communicating about their charges in significant ways. They are neither in touch as much as is normally warranted nor in tune to what the other party is attempting to say or do about the education of the child.

Issues Interfering With Parent-Teacher Communication

The October 16, 1978, edition of Pennsylvania Education (Vol. 10, No. 3) carried an article entitled "Parents and Teachers Split Over Schools" which presented seriously disturbing issues. The article was also highlighted by the analysis of the 1978 Pennsylvania Department of Education, Educational Quality Assessment and a Gallup poll of puplic attitudes towards schools. Responses from 19,000 teachers indicate that twenty percent of the elementary, thirty-nine percent of the junior high and forty-five percent of the high school teachers feel that lack of parent-teacher interaction is critical or serious.

Similar percentages of teachers believe that parents do not value education highly and show little or no interest in their children's schoolwork. Another indictment was directed towards students, but directly involves parents. Teachers denounced the poor study habits exhibited by students. The implication is that study skills are taught in school and should be reinforced more regularly and emphatically in the home.

Conversely, many of the parents polled stated that teachers' attitudes toward communicating with parents are poor, and they would prefer to have closer relationships with teachers. Parents want more conferences with teachers and tips as to what can be done in the home to help children perform well in school.

While parents expressed the belief that discipline is the top school problem, two-thirds of secondary and more than one-third of elementary teachers felt that parents did not support them strongly enough on this issue.

Add to these several facts about modern education: (1) some educators presently face litigation prompted by the graduation of functional illiterates; (2)educators now are accountable to a more sopisticated, media-informed citizenry; and (3) there is a movement toward minimal requirements for graduation. Then it becomes very clear that parents and teachers need to wade through the attitudinal mire and emerge on solid ground concerning the education of children. How this may be accomplished is open for debate; however, it is evident that the days are over when Parent-Teacher Organizations can serve as arenas for adequate parent-teacher information interaction, as well as for awarding of the most parents-in-attendance banners and for providing cookie dispensation. Parents and teachers should (and some will) facilitate their children's education more fully and cooperatively.

Steps to Facilitate Communication During Parent-Teacher Conferences

A logical setting in which teachers and parents can begin this cooperative endeavor is the parent-teacher conference. These often have been a source of tension and miscommunication, but this need not be the situation if the conference participants keep the following points in mind.

1. Parents and teachers should both speak in easily understood language and should arrive at operational difinitions for educational terms that preclude real communication.

Since the teaching profession maintains a large and ever growing corpus of words that many classify as "educational jargon", it is the responsibility of the teacher to use laymen's language whenever possible, to translate professional "jargon" when necessary and to listen very carefully to parental discriptions of behaviors or symptoms so that they may be discussed later using educationl terms if the parent requests it.

In 1978, the Education Department of the Urban League of Pittsburgh compiled a glossary for parents of terms, which the author called "Educanese," at the middle school level. Along with serious humourous definitions, there is a blank page at the end of the booklet for "additions picked up during the conference." Teachers and parents at all levels might find a similar device helpful.

2. Teachers and parents should discuss their respective educational philosophies and points of view regarding effective ways of teaching when these issure appear to be a source of even minimal conflict. Since most parents have observed teachers in operation for approximately 10,000 hours (Lay and Dopyers, 1977, p. 22) and many have been exposed to recent opinion on educational issues via the media, they often feel as qualified as teachers and administrators to endorse teaching methods and to suggest how schools should be run. The teacher should be able to clearly state and support his/her rationale for teaching goals and program procedures.

3. Teachers and parents should be sensitive to the physical arrangement of the conference area. A place where both parties are on an equal plane and on the same side of a desk or table is appropriate. Parents who find themselves in tiny chairs while the teacher occupies the only adult chair in the room, or on the opposite side of the desk from the teacher, should request movement to a spot more conducive to an equitable verbal exchange and/or materials examination.

4. Teachers and parents should keep uppermost in their minds that the purpose of the interaction is to benefit the child. It may be necessary to exercise self-control and tact when dealing with a person who does not react positively to one's own temperament or style. Keeping the focus of discussion on the child will minimize resistance and emphasize co-operation.

5. Teachers and parents should discuss and/or design specific tasks which the parents can do with their children at home to reinforce the skills taught in school. Materials and directions sent home with an earnest parent can prove invaluable to the

child's total educational program at any level.

Once positive communication has been established through parent-teacher conferences, even more productive interaction may be promoted by engaging in a parent training program. Research has indicated that programs in which parents recieve training from school personnel, as well as receiving material to be used in the home, have a positive effect on children's progress (Gordon, 1969).

The Parent Training Program

A training program for parents can be initiated by a single teacher or parent, by a group of teachers and/or parents, by a building administrator, or by district supervisory personnel. The design of the program will depend upon multiple factors, including the expressed needs of the parents and school personnel. However, four processes should occur before and during any training program, whether it is for parents or for school personnel in-service.

1. A needs assessment will provide the basis for planning. Needs assessment data may be collected in a variety of ways. During conferences, the teacher could interview the parent concerning the content of a potential training program. Since the focus of the parent-teacher conference is specific to the special strengths and needs of a given child (cognitive and intellectual, affective, psychomotor, perceptual, social, interests, etc.). Interested parents can generate lists of specific instructional and informational needs.

Questionnaires devised by school personnel could be distributed to parents at conferences or open house or sent home via mail or children. Since delivery systems fail occasionally and return on questionnaires is notoriously low, it may be necessary to follow-up with a phone call. This is time-consuming, but may provide contact with a parent who could not participate otherwise. One-on-one interaction is usually more productive regardless of the method for eliciting data.

2. A written statement of general goals, specific objectives and a calendar of parent training sessions with specific topics listed per session should be prepared for distribution to all target parents. The "slate of events" may produce interest for some parents with whom a conference, interview or questionnaire did not succeed.

3. Activities selection is crucial to the success of a parent training program.

The selection of activities depends largely on the types of input requested during the needs assessment.

When information is requested on fairly general topics, such as the developmental characteristics of a particular age group or using commercial television to enhance comprehension, the lecture or illustrated lecture (using charts, transparencies, slides, filmstrips, etc.) may be the most efficient form of delivery.

Situations in which parents want to obtain background information and to share the perceptions of other parents and educators about controversial topic, such as discipline in the schools, may require a combination of the lecture (to provide factual data) and follow-up interaction activities. Group interviews, small or large group discussions, brain-storming and buzz sissions all encourage interaction and problem solving. (For succinct advice on facilitating these activities, see Inservice Education to Inmprove Reading Instruction, Otto and Erikson, 1973.)

For parents who desire instruction that will help them reinforce specific skills at home, a combination of the lecture and demonstration methods is recommended. Basic teaching techniques and examples can be presented by lecture and modelled during demonstration. Demonstration can be live using children, simulations in which parents role-play children of a certain level or video-taped. Taped demonstrations often prove to be more useful because of the replay element. Parts of a demonstration may be rerun for indepth analysis during follow-up discussion.

Another beneficial use of video-tape equipment, which can help parents practice teaching skills, could occur during micro-teaching. Although most parent training programs do not include the time for such activities, parents could actually teach brief lessons (ten or fifteen minutes in length) which are video-taped. The teacher and parent or parent group could later critique the tape, focusing on selected aspects of the lesson (sequencing, positive reinforcement, choice of materials, etc.).

A hands-on workshop format is appropriate when parents need to make materials for use at home. Parent-teacher discussions throughout the workshop can clarify directions for creating materials and using them with the child to best advantage.

No matter what the content or style of each session, information and teaching techniques presented to parents must support and complement what is occurring in the child's classroom(s). The child should receive consistent signals at school and at home. The reinforcement aspect of the parents' work with children should be stressed.

4. During the parent training program and at its conclusion, results should be evaluated. Feedback from parents and session facilitators should be elicited on an on-going basis so that program goals and objectives may be verified or indicated changes made.

Implications

As more and more parents become actively involved in the education of their children, forms of involvement will vary: individual parent-teacher conferencing, participation in parent-teacher organizations, sitting on citizen's curriculum advisory councils, serving on parent task forces selected to explore issure for school board advisement, and so on. These positive parent-school personnel efforts should result in gradual change which only can enhance the education of each unique learner.

Points of conflict affecting the attitudes of both teachers and parents should be ab least partially resolved. Reducing conflict should lead to more parental support for what the school is doing and clear the way for higher individual acheivement. A correlational study of student achievement on the Pennsylvania Educational Quality Assessment cited previously and survey data from the same students concerning their parents' interest in school revealed that students whose parents supported the school's efforts rated higher on almost all measurements at every level. (Pennsylvania Education, 1978)

Greater parent-teacher co-operation can help primary children to acquire basic reading, writing, mathematics and social skills, thereby insuring later literacy. Intermediate and older students can be encouraged to use what they learn inside and outside of the classroom. Kindergarten through twelfth grade classroom instruction is not enough to ensure application of these skills in real life situations. Parents and teachers must help their children to see the relevance between school-acquired skills and the benefits of practical use in everyday life.

In summation, the words of Francis Bacon appear to fit, "A wise man will make more opportunities than he finds". Perhaps it is not stretching his intent too far when reasoning that wise teachers and parents will make opportunities for the development of the whole child. Hopefully, they will do it together.

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TEACHING READING AT HOME:
PRODUCTIVE AND NONPRODUCTIVE ACTIVITIES

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Three years ago this writer joined the growing group of reading professionals fascinated by the phenomenon of children who learn to read before school entry. To look for patterns in the perceptual and psycholinguistic backgrounds of early readers, seven case studies of five and six-year-olds who had learned to read at ages four and five were undertaken. The procedure of this study involved administration of informal reading inventories, the Illinois Test of Psycholinguistic Abilities, the Carrow Elicited Language Inventory, the Roswell-Chall Test of Phonic Knowledge, among other measures, and comparison of the children's profiles. Profiles revealed few quantitative similarities among the children unrelated to the fact that all could read. More interesting than the statistics collected were the anecdotal records compiled during the testing. These revealed several clues to the way young children process language and respond to the task of learning to read.

This paper is organized like a sandwich. Its top and bottom are rather soft and flexible speculation based on personal experiences with seven early readers. Its middle contains a discussion of the information that the research and expository literature offer to those who wonder whether and how children should or could learn to read at home.

Case Studies

No child teaches him or herself to read unaided. The printed word must be accessible in the environment. A reading person must be present to model reading and to answer questions. Some children seem to "catch" reading so independently that they are called "natural readers." Three of the seven children studied might be classified as "natural." Two of the girls and a boy read at the fourth and fifth grade levels at ages five and six. All three preferred silent to oral reading. Each had one slightly older sibling, watched "Sesame Street," and was read to by parents. The parents of these "natural readers" were concerned that their children might be bored during school reading instruction.

Children who, like Rita, Kathy, and Joe, learn to read fluently without direct instruction have been the subjects of a few studies. The most detailed is a report of testing and parent interviews conducted to follow the progress of 32 British early readers by Clark (1976). Forester (1977) recently reviewed most of the better known American studies, including Durkin's (1966). Investigations of natural readers led Clark and Forester to the opinion that educators should provide more natural settings for the teaching of reading in classrooms. Given a supportive environment and a reading model, some children learn to read without formal instruction. Durkin's studies suggest that in the early 1960's, 1 to 3 percent of the children entering school could read. This proportion may have increased during the last decade.

Returning to the seven early readers studied, the three remaining girls and a boy had received varying degrees of deliberate instruction from a parent. One mother played word search games with her child; another taught phonics; a third, a reading teacher, developed a word card file with her daughter. Each of these children was able to read at the first grade level before entering first grade. These children associated reading with oral reading, and all admitted that they preferred being read to rather than reading for themselves. All watched "Sesame Steet" and "The Electric Company." None had an older sibling close in age. Three had working mothers, and one was from a single parent family. The parents of these four children were pleased with their progress and viewed their early reading as an advantage in starting school. The experiences of these children may be of more interest to parents and teachers than the experiences of the "natural" readers, for Nancy, Jenny, Barbara, and Charles exhibited more of the frustration, task avoidance, and puzzlement, along with pride in accomplishment, that most children encounter in learning to read.

Consequences of Early Reading Instruction

Early reading instruction? Why? Why not! Making a decision about whether or not a child should be taught to read at home requires knowledge of the probable consequences for the child. The question of whether early readers retain their initial advantage over their reading peers was addressed by Durkin in two studies reported in Children Who Read Early (1966). Durkin followed 34 Oakland, California, children who had learned to read before school entry through sixth grade and 156 New York early readers through third grade. The New York children were paired with a control group of nonearly readers. From her data, Durkin concluded that early readers did maintain their reading achievement advantage over children of similar intelligence. As a result of her work in this area, Durkin urged cessation of the debate over when to begin reading instruction and a harder look at the issue of how to begin reading instuction (Durkin, 1968).

Durkin's work authoritatively assures parents that the early reading child continues to be accelerated in reading beyond peers of similar intelligence during the elementary years, but it does not address other possible objections to the early teaching of reading, namely 1) possible physical damage to children, especially to their vision, 2) possible psychological damage to children from early academic pressure, 3) possible interference or boredom with later schoolwork, 4) the inappropriate nature of some instructional methods for young children, and 5) the irrelevancy of reading to the lives of many young children (Smethurst, 1975). Except in the area of vision (Shaw, 1964), research has not addressed the questions raised by these concerns for early readers. Common sense suggests that each of the cautions raised is valid in certain cases but that none can be viewed as a definitive prohibition of the home teaching of reading to a normal, healthy child. Reading is, in fact, a source of delight to some young children. Some parents can find ways to help early readers appropriately and without undue pressure. Curious, thinking children who know how to read can use their skill to open new doors to learning when they get to school.

Whether to Teaching Reading at Home

Having assured oneself that the teaching of reading at home is not categorically prohibited and is, in fact, encouraged by some educators, the parent still faces the question, "Should I teach my child to read?" Answers to this question depend upon both the child and the parent.

The most important component in readiness for learning to read at home is the child's interest. If a child constantly asks, "What's this word?" "How do you spell that?" or "Will you teach me to read?" the parent has a clear signal of interest. Pretending to read, reciting momorized books, sounding out words, naming letters, reading television or billboard ads, and commenting about initial sounds of words are other ways young children may demonstrate knowledge of and interest in the reading process. Some children are more interested in learning to write or spell than in reading. These interests should be fostered as alternative pathways to literacy. Tests for assessing the reading readiness of school children have traditionally included measures of auditory and visual discrimination, vocabulary knowledge, letter naming ability. and ability to follow directions. Although competency in each of these areas is logically associated with the task of learning to read, formal readiness testing is not recommended for preschoolers. A young child who, due to a lack of prerequisite skills, is unable to complete a reading related task will not persist in that task voluntarily. Thus, interest is probably the best gauge of a young child's readiness.

Parents who believe they see the necessary interest developing in a child need to assess themselves, as well as their child. Time is certainly needed to teach a child to read. The structure of the time required depends on the approach selected. The instructional time required by the more formal approaches is a minimum of twenty minutes per day. Less formal approaches may require little or no regularly scheduled time but demand the frequent availability of a reader to answer questions. In Durkin's study the available parents were mothers. Durkin reported that mothers of early readers described themselves as "busy" less often than did mothers of non-early readers. Mothers of early readers in both the Durkin and Clark studies reported enjoyment of their children and of being in the home environment. Incidence of working mothers among early readers has not been systematically addressed, but Clark clearly associates early reading with mothers who make time to be with children and to read at home themselves. The influence of fathers on their children's learning to read has not been studied.

Other factors parents should assess before teaching a child to read at home are typical reactions to the child's behavior and their own motivation. They might consider such questions as: How do I feel when my child gives the wrong answer? What do I say when my child becomes frustrated? How patient am I when my child does not understand? Am I sure that my child is as interested in learning to read as I am in teaching him or her?

Getting Ready to Read

If the parent is unsure of the child's interest in actually learning to read but wishes to provide a solid foundation for eventual reading instruction at home or in school, there are many ways to foster the attitudes and habits associated with lifelong reading. Some productive ways of getting ready for reading are listed below:

1. Reading aloud to a child encourages a love of books. The child should be seated beside or on the lap of the reader to view pictures and to see the words. A knowledge of the child's interests combined with ideas from librarians and booklists should suggest endless possibilities for reading aloud. Books which include bibliographies of read-aloud suggestions for young children include _Literature and Young Children_ (Cullinan, 1977), _The World of Books for Children: A Parent's Guide_ (Hunt, 1979), _A Parent's Guide to Children's Reading_ (Larrick, 1964), _Start Early for an Early Start_ (Leonard, 1976), _Preparing Your Child for Reading_ (Tinker, 1971), and _What Books and Records Should I Get for My Preschooler?_ (Rogers, n.d.).

2. Dictated stories and self-made books are excellent materials for reading aloud to young children. Print your child's words as he or she dictates to you. Read back what has been written. A family album, photographs, and scrapbooks are good stimuli for dictation.

3. Young children often enjoy hearing favorite stories read more frequently than adults enjoy reading them. Records and cassette tapes of stories provide for unlimited retellings. Secure quality records and tapes for listening. Some sound tracks are designed so the child may follow along in a companion book. In a few communities, Dial-a-Story enables children to hear stories, a different one each week, over the telephone (Geistlinger, 1976).

4. Take advantage of literary experiences for young children provided by television and commercial films. View literature-based specials or films with your child, taking time to discuss them and to compare them to the related books (Sloan, n.d.).

5. Accompany the child to the community library or bookmobile. Time for browsing through the children's collection enables even non-readers to explore the potential of books. Allow your child to select some of the books that are checked out. Take advantage of library programs of interest to preschoolers. Story times, puppet shows, or toy and record collections may help to make the library a very special place to

your child.

6. A personal library affords the child an opportunity to keep book friends. Book ownership teaches care of books and allows the child to enjoy favorites again and again. Birthdays and other special occasions may be marked by giving children books inscribed for remembering through the years (Gagliardo, 1971).

7. A child's book collection should be stored in a place accessible to the user. A shelf the child has helped build or paint may add to the value of the library for that child (Chan, n.d.).

8. Children's literature is not the only source of interesting reading material in the home. Magazines, newspapers, cartoons, game directions, labels on food containers, bulletin boards, street signs, and any other material read by adults has potential for interesting a child in reading. Share whatever you are reading with children when they express an interest in it (Wartenberg, 1970).

9. Use reference books to answer questions as they arise in the home. Seeing adults look things up in the dictionary, atlas, encyclopedia, TV guide, concordance, or almanac shows children the value of these books (Larrick, 1964).

10. Reading is fostered by adult models (Mathews, 1972). Seeing parents reading to themselves reinforces concepts of reading for pleasure. Children should see adults of both sexes reading.

11. Writing is closely related to reading. Materials for writers should be available in the home: pencils and markers, lined paper, a chalk and chalkboard, note paper and envelopes, even a typewriter (Granowsky, 1977). Scribbling is the way young children begin to write.

12. Successful reading depends on an oral language base. Promote conversation in the home. Times when the family is gathered together for meals, travel, or an activity are times for conversation. Encourage each child to talk by listening without interrupting or anticipating what will be said. Ask questions if you do not understand. Encourage children to explain their responses rather than simply nodding or pointing (Wright, n.d.).

13. Talk with children. Explain what you are doing and why. Speak lovingly and naturally, responding to questions and encouraging discussion (Rogers, n.d.). Take advantage of opportunities to develop vocabulary by talking about the sound, appearance,

feel, taste, and smell of items in the environment. Discuss sizes, shapes, colors, and classifications of objects (Graham, n.d.).

14. Encourage play with puppets, dolls, dress-up clothes, play stores, medical kits, and telephones. Dramatic play fosters talking in a variety of roles.

15. Talk about books. Look at books one page at a time, and discuss the pictures. Encourage retelling of familiar stories from the pictures, and stimulate oral reactions to wordless picture books (Schroepfer, 1976). When reading aloud, pause sometimes to ask questions such as "And what do you think happened then?" or "What would you do if that happened to you?" (Tinker, 1971).

16. Take trips with your child, talking about your plans, discussing what you see, and recalling the experience together. Repeat trips to places you have visited before. Children's interests change over time, and there will be many new things to discuss (Tinker, 1971).

How to Teach Reading

When a child has well developed oral language skills and a concept of the purpose of reading, the parents may decide to respond to the child's expressed interest by teaching the child to read. At this point the parent will look for guidance in how to teach reading and will, very likely, be overwhelmed by the many handbooks and approaches that are available. In 1971 Aukerman described over 100 approaches to beginning reading and reviewed the research evidence relating to each. The materials published for any of these approaches, and more, would be available to the parent who chose to locate and purchase them.

In general, guides to teaching children to read at home employ two major types of approaches. The synthetic approaches begin by teaching the child letter names or letter sounds. Letters are then used to sound words which are, often, in turn, read as parts of sentences. The analytic approaches use the word, sometimes in sentences, as a basic unit. The child first learns to recognize a substantial number of words, often words for objects in the environment. The words are then used in sentences written by the child, the adult, or in books. Advocates of analytic approaches often suggest that phonics instruction be left to the school. A third approach, the language experience approach, is not widely described in materials addressed to parents but has much to recommend in teaching reading to the young child. Before offering some general suggestions for the teaching of reading at home, some representative examples of analytic and synthetic approaches are described.

Synthetic Approaches

Synthetic approaches seem to predominate in home reading guides for parents. One of the most notorious is contained in Flesch's Why Johnny Can't Read, published in 1955 as an indictment of the strongly analytic approaches of the days best-selling school reading programs. At the back of his book Flesch provided a group of exercises he recommends for use with children as young as five. The exercises feature letter sounds first and then involve the learner in decoding page after page of words that are grouped together to highlight certain sounds, beginning with the short vowel sounds. Flesch suggests that the parent teach spelling along with reading by dictating for encoding by the child all the words successfully decoded. Flesch's approach is deliberately devoid of emphasis on meaning.

A more complete approach to reading synthetically is presented in Let's Read, by Bloomfield and Barnhart (1961). The system introduced to the parents who use this book is Bloomfield's linguistic approach. After learning the alphabet, upper and lower case, the child is introduced to word families that utilize short vowel sounds. Along with word lists, the child reads sentences such as "Can Dan fan Nan?" As more and more word families are introduced, old patterns are reviewed, and the reader is exposed to connected discourse whose content is dictated by the known patterns. Much praised from a scholarly point of view, Bloomfield's approach offers little that would seem to appeal to young children although children have learned to read by its application (Aukerman, 1971).

A more child-oriented example of an synthetic approach is developed in Gould's Home Guide to Early Reading (1976). Gould suggests a series of readiness games that build skills in listening, vocabulary, following directions, classifying, auditory discrimaination, and eye-hand coordination before introducing the child to letter sounds. Letter sound knowledge is reinforced by associations with objects, pictures, and letters through gamelike activities. When the letter sounds have been mastered, words are read, not from lists, but as part of a variety of games that resemble dominoes, lotto, slapjack, and concentration. Gould's guide for parents follows the pattern of her earlier sturctural approach to reading. Aukerman cites no research for this approach but acknowledges some of its attractive features, which are continued in the latter book.

Other examples of beginning reading programs which take an synthetic approach abound. "Sesame Street" introduces letters and letter sounds in novel, fast paced television commercial format (Lesser, 1974). A few years before the Children's Television Workshop introduced "Sesame Street," the Denver Public Schools involved parents in teaching four year olds to read through techniques learned via educational television. The approach recommended to parents involved children's establishing initial sounds, associating them with letter forms, and associating sounds with words (Brzeinski, 1971). Recent publications of the Dallas Independent School District provide parents with tests to assess their children's entry level and progress on reading related tasks. An outgrowth of the Dallas experience, *For Parents and Children: A Guide to Better Reading* (Granowsky, 1977), clearly identifies the analytic tasks of reading, offers a test with scoring guidelines for each one, and suggests games and activities to improve performance in each.

Analytic Approaches

The best known of the books which advance a analytic approach to home reading instruction is Doman's *How to Teach Your Baby to Read* (1964). Doman advocates the use of large-print word cards to teach children as young as two to differentiate one word from another. Children are then exposed to words naming parts of the body and home and family words. After learning the additional function words needed to form sentences, the child can read patterned phrases, sentences, and books. As a final step, and quite incidentally, the child may learn the alphabet. Doman's exposition makes his approach sound logical and simple, but rational judgment is tried by surprising and unsubstantiated assertions such as "the younger a child is when he learns to read, the easier it will be for him to read and the better he will read" (p. 1). A parent who used Doman's approach to teach her two-year-old to read expands on it in *Reading and Writing Before School* (1971). Hughes continues the instructional sequence outlined by Doman with what appears to be incidental phonics instruction and the reinforcement of letter sounds through writing.

In *Helping Children Learn to Read: A Primer for Parents*, Pickering (1977) advances the word as the initial unit for teaching and learning. He suggests that after the child has demonstrated the ability to read restroom signs, cereal boxes, store names, storybook character names, or other words in the environment, the parent should develop a file of 3x5 cards containing the known words. More words are added as the child reads or expresses interest in reading them. As the child's reading vocabulary grows, function words and other high frequency words are added to the fild to permit the composition of sentences and the reading of books. Pickering suggests labeling objects in the environment, flashcard games, the writing of letters and stories, and personal dictionary construction as means of practicing the words learned. He views appropriate selection of books as the key ingredient for the child's success in reading because of the importance of controlled vocabulary to match the level of the child's word recognition.

Which Approach?

Which approach to the teaching of reading is best? This was the research question addressed in the first grade studies undertaken by the U. S. Office of Education in 1964 (Bond, 1967). Comparing the effectiveness of the major approaches to beginning reading then in use, the researchers concluded that all were effective in some situations. Although the first grade studies did not identify the best approach to teaching reading, they did offer some conclusions that might guide parents trying to choose among approaches:

1. Combinations of approaches are often better than single approaches.
2. Children who enter school with knowledge of letter names and can discriminate between sounds perform better under every approach to school reading insturction.
3. Children should be taught a technique for learning new words.
4. Writing helps to reinforce sound-letter relationships.
5. Initial reading vocabulary should include both regularly spelled words and high frequency words.

Taken together, these conclusions seem to point to some combination of analytic and synthetic approaches. Extreme approaches to the teaching of reading, in either direction, run the risk of allowing the learner (and the teacher) to lose track of the purpose for which one reads--to understand what has been written. A study by Dix

(1976) attests eloquently to this point. As a result of a survey of the definitions of reading of the parents of good and poor elementary school readers, Dix discovered that parents of poor readers defined reading as word attack. Parents of good readers viewed reading more globally, as a source of knowledge, enjoyment, and adventure. An important aspect of whatever approach to reading is used is that it not jeoparidze the child's interest in or love for reading.

Language Experience

Another approach to beginning reading, the language experience approach, is an example of a combination method with potential for engaging young children. In this approach, the child dictates narrative or personal experiences to the parent. Subjects for dictation are limitless and may take many forms: picture captions, weather reports, letters to grandparents, television viewing schedules, breakfast menus, retellings of favorite folktales, to mention only a few. As the child dictates, he or she is seated in a position from which the parent's writing may be viewed. According to the level of the child, the parent may comment on letter forms or on spellings while receiving dictation. When doubtful of wording, the parent consults the child. The child will be more likely to read what has been written if it represents his exact words. When the dictation is completed, the parent reads it aloud to the child and then invites the child to read along. For less mature children, instruction terminates here, but experienced learners may engage in numerous follow-up activities. The child may read all or part of what has been written. The writing may be illustrated, cut into sentence strips to be arranged in sequence, or used as a source of words to be added to a card fild of known words. The child may circle known words, locate words that start with given letters or sounds, or recopy the story in spaces under the parent's writing. The language experience approach is flexible enough to lead into word banking as described by Pickering or into phonics games as described by Gould. Research on the language experience approach has been reviewed by Hall (1977), who concluded that in a school situation it is as effective as other approaches. Highly individualized at its best, the approach may be more effectively used by a parent at home than by a teacher with groups of children.

Some Guidelines

Whatever approach to reading is used, the parent would do well to keep in mind some of the demonstrated principles of learning. First, the child learns best by moving from the known to the unknown. When the child narrates a personal experience, reads brand names of cereals in the supermarket, or adds to a list of words that follow a familiar pattern, this principle of learning is followed. The materials of instruction should reflect the child's interest and vocabulary. Second, children learn best when several senses are engaged. Let the child see the word or letter, hear it, write it, and say it. Use pictures and objects, magnetic letters, and activities that promote direct involvement. Third, children learn best when they understand the purpose of teaching. It is hard to remember sometimes that learning letters can lead to the goal of reading. Remind the child of what has already been learned and why. Provide an opportunity to review what was learned yesterday and to decide what will be learned tomorrow. Introduce goals that the child can achieve. Fourth, learning occurs best in a positive atmosphere. Praise and rewards are satisfying to both parents and children. And fifth, learning occurs best in real situations. Whenever possible, the parents should give the child opportunities to see how sounds are used in words, words are used in sentences, and sentences are used in books. (Emery, 1975).

Children's reactions to reading tasks

Working with young children on a project as conceptually complex as learning to read cannot help but lead to some surprises for the teacher-parent. Much of what has been written about teaching children to read at home outlines content and suggests procedures for lessons but gives little hint of how children may react to them. Conducting case studies of early readers provided this writer with documentation of several characteristics of preschool learners performing reading related tasks.

First, children do not always understand terminology or task purposes in the same way the adult does. One day, for example, Barbara was working on auditory discrimination. From the teacher's point of view, her task was to say "same" if two words pronounced were identical. If the words pronounced differed in any way, Barbara was to say, "different." As the activity began, Barbara's responses were surprising. Detective work revealed that if the words differed in initial sounds, Barbara said, "different." If they differed by final or medial sounds, she said, "same." This pattern persisted for some time. Another example of confusion in terminology occured when Kathy and Jenny talked very matter of factly about "the silent e rule." Questioning revealed that neither girl recognized that the silent e was final or that it had any relationship to the sound of another vowel. A third example of conceptual confusion came from the case study of Rita. In retelling a story about two men that she had read silently, Rita insisted that the word man could refer to only one character because he was standing and the other was sitting!

Another characteristic of young children in the reading instructional situation, as in other contexts, is their need and desire for concrete and imaginative activities. On several occasions children were asked to pantomime the actions of story characters. Two of the seven children were unwilling to do so without props. A concrete aide used in testing the children was a set of magnetic letters which were arranged to spell words. Two of the more manually dexterous children preferred to write, but most were fond of the letters and liked to arrange them in various ways. An example of imaginative play with letters was produced by Rita, who first arranged them in alphabetical order. When asked to spell a word, she personified the letters. Given cat, Rita told c to come forward. C got in line on the table and then returned to the alphabet display to get a, keeping up a monologue on how much fun it would be for the two letters to stand together. Then a went to get t, again carrying on a conversation. Spelling ten words took half an hour by this highly dramatic procedure. Nancy's dramatic scheme for the magnetic letters kept her from spelling dictated words completely. She sorted all the letters by color, (They were randomly made of five or six different colors of plastic) and then would spell only words that kept "friends" of the same color together.

As a result of the children's penchant for the concrete and dramatic, they could sometimes be persuaded to continue with difficult tasks by making them more playful. Tired or frustrated children often responded with new vigor when allowed to talk for a puppet. Putting the child in the role of teacher was also effective in capturing wandering attention. In a few cases, children refused to complete tasks. Charles, for example, would not participate in a sentence repetition exercise. He said that questions should be followed by answers, and it was dumb for someone just to say the words of another person. He never did the sentence repetition task. Confronted with the same task, Kathy laughed and laughed. She said she would never do anything so silly, but she was induced to let a puppet repeat the sentences under the guise of teaching it to talk.

Finally, children, like adults, try, when frustrated, to modify talk to make it more like a familiar experience. Charles had learned to read chiefly by playing word search games with his mother. It was easy to gauge his level of frustration by the frequency with which he suggested that we play a word search game now. Jenny could be comforted when afraid of failure by playing "dog." Nancy liked to be read to between test activities. Several of the children were quite reluctant to guess and became frightened and insecure when urged to do so. Each had certain activities which seemed to offer a measure of comfort and reassurance and freely suggested them.

The parent embarking on the course of teaching a child to read at home may be assured that each child is different, that there is no one best way to teach reading, and that young children do not voluntarily continue with tasks that are too difficult. The way a parent begins to teach will inevitably influence the course of later instruction because of the need for daily review and because of the child's need for the security of the familiar. If things are going badly, however, there is no harm in trying a new approach or in waiting a few months before trying again' When the conditions are right, young children can discover the joy of reading at home, and parents can have the joy of teaching them.

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